

AUGUST 2015 / IRON MAN MAGAZINE

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MUSCLE**

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TO HUGE GAINS**

**FUTURE
OF PRO
PHYSIQUE**

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THE FAST-GROWING SPORT

INTENSE AB TRAINING
BUILD MUSCLE BURN FAT

ALPHA MALE
LIFT WITH
POWER



AUGUST 2015

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**MAN ON A
MISSION**
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A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a man's torso and face. He is shirtless, showing a very muscular physique with prominent abdominal muscles and broad shoulders. His mouth is wide open in a shout or yell, and his eyes are squeezed shut. His arms are crossed over his chest. The background is dark and textured, with some light streaks and a bright orange-yellow flame-like effect on the right side. Overlaid on the center of his chest is the text "BLOOD, SWEAT & TEARS" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight metallic or distressed texture.

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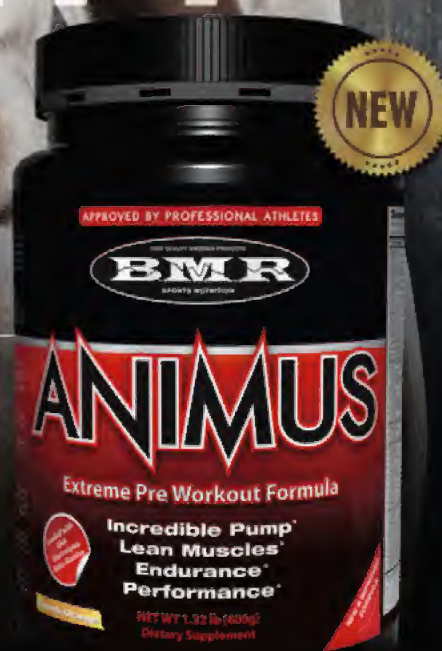
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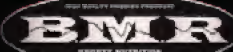
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Flavor: Orange

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ANYTIME

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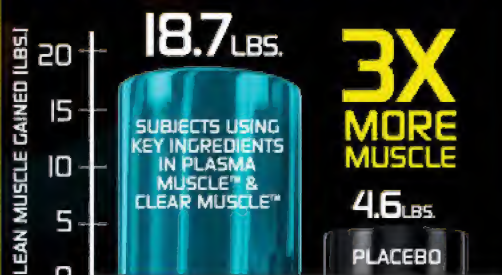
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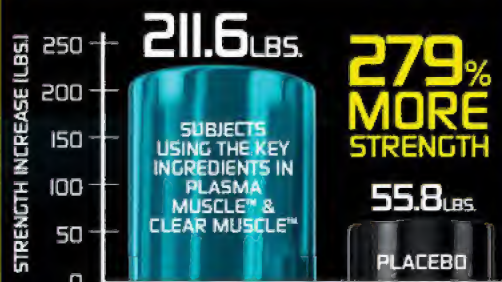


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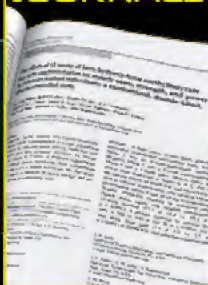


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IRON MAN

AUGUST 2015



44

**SONNY
BROWN**

On the Cover

Sonny Brown
Photo by Per Bernal

FEATURES

44 MAN ON A MISSION

The life of Aussie fitness expert and model Sonny Brown is a lesson in the unstoppable power of a strong work ethic and ceaseless determination.

58 FAST GAINS

A mix of dynamic lifting, giant sets, and bodyweight exercises will send your body into controlled overtraining and a period of explosive muscle growth.

68 HIGH-INTENSITY ABS

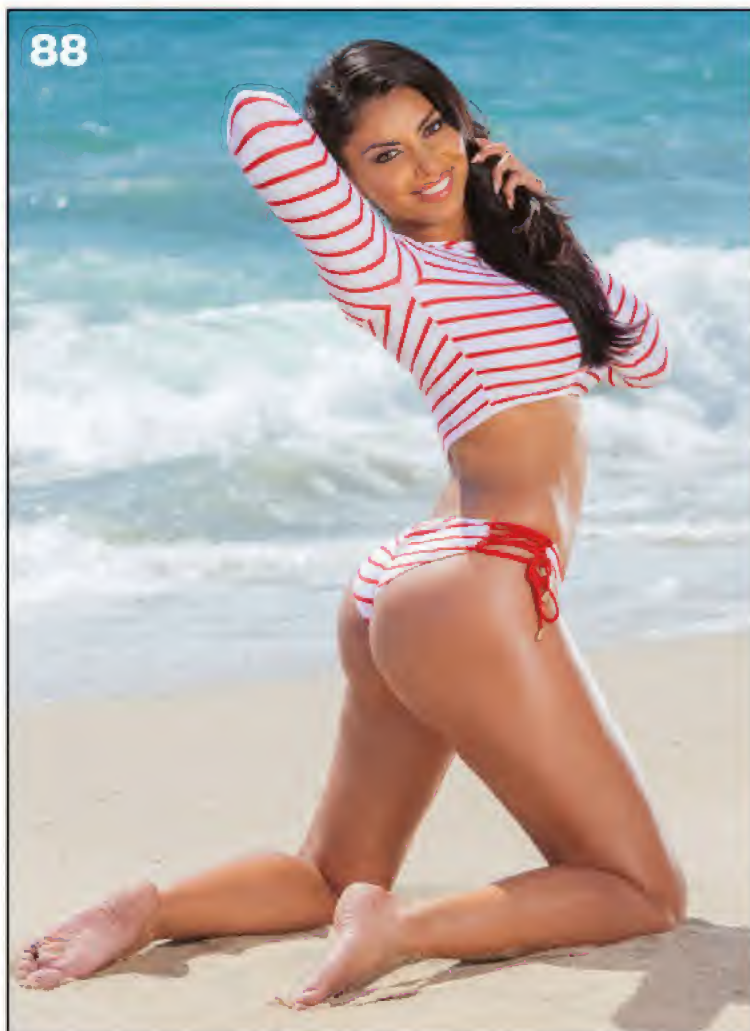
Getting your abs to pop is a combination of developing the musculature and burning off the body fat that hides them. Do both at once with this brand of calorie-burning core training.

80 THE FUTURE OF PHYSIQUE

Men's Physique is a young sport that is evolving at a startling pace. Our panel of experts—one trainer, one competitor, and one judge—share what they think is in store for the blockbuster division.

88 HARDBODY: LA REINA SHAW

With exotic features and proportions that defy the laws of physics, fitness sensation La Reina Shaw is the hottest thing on the beach.





DEPARTMENTS

16 TRAIN TO GAIN

Smooth out the kinks in your deadlift technique and check out the best wireless headphones for hardcore workouts.

22 TWIG TO BIG

Fitness expert Vince DelMonte explains why the guiding principle of your workout program is more important than getting caught up in the details.

26 IM FAT LOSS RESEARCH

A collection of cutting-edge discoveries that support you in the fight against fat.

28 IM MUSCLE RESEARCH

Science you can use when it comes to developing a full and muscular physique.

30 EAT TO GROW

Our nutrition expert explains why a late-night hit of quality protein can be one of the best things you can do to spur muscle growth.

36 IM NUTRITION RESEARCH

The latest information on how to use food and supplements to lift harder, look better, and live longer.

40 GO PRO

Fitness model Thomas DeLauer thinks that Physique athletes should abandon the traditional cycle of binging and dieting in favor of maintaining year-round form.

96 EXTREME TRAINING

What happens when you combine high-intensity interval training with the Big 3 exercises from powerlifting? You get crazy results.

100 NEWS & VIEWS

Industry raconteur Lonnie Teper and his guest make their picks for the men's and women's contests at the 2015 Mr. Olympia weekend.

108 ANTI-AGING

Anti-aging specialists Dr. Brett Osborn and Jay Campbell discuss the strategy of cutting calories as you age in order to promote longevity.

112 THE FINAL WORD

Our readers have the final say.

In the next IRON MAN:

Physique favorite Anton Antipov talks about his own training and nutrition, and discusses the methodical madness of competing in 13 shows in one year. The September issue of *Iron Man* hits newsstands September 1.

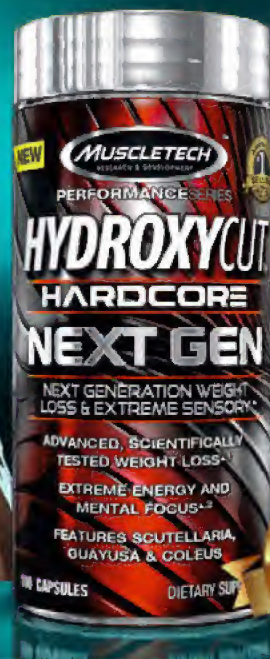
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Who's To Blame?



Even though it's been almost six months since Arnold made comments about the unappealing direction modern bodybuilding has taken, his words still echo throughout the bodybuilding communities with divided opinions. Arnold criticized competitors for their swollen bellies and judges for picking the winners with "the biggest muscles" without taking into consideration the full

aesthetic. He said that the winner should be someone with a body that all men want to have. Most bodybuilding fans agree with these issues in modern bodybuilding. And while the subject has been up for discussion for years now, it never got much attention until someone of Arnold's magnitude and credibility pointed it out.

Arnold put blame on judges and those in charge of them. Even though I rarely agree with the judges' decisions at pro shows, the issue is more complex than what Arnold makes it sound. It's a combination of many factors, including the natural evolution of every sport, the human desire to progress, bodybuild-

"The change has already happened, and it's called Men's Physique! Now, please, put the Men's Physique competition on the main stage at the Arnold Classic in Columbus instead of including it as an expo sideshow."

ing magazines putting muscle monsters on the cover, and supplement companies endorsing the biggest guys. We can't point fingers to just one person or thing in particular.

The progress of modern bodybuilding has also brought about a lot of great things. The sport has reached record-breaking heights with so many practitioners and fans worldwide. There are now expos and competitions everywhere, and we see more and more and more well-built bodies being accepted in mainstream media.

Another great thing that has happened to bodybuilding is Men's Physique. I salute the NPC for creating this division, as it brings the aesthetic and appealing look back to the stage. Highlighting this category is easier than trying to change and regress bodybuilding the way it is now. Men's Physique guys have established themselves in such a short time as superstars of the sport. Small waist, broad shoulders, and great marketing skills have drawn thousands of fans to them. Nowadays, expo lines for physique guys are longer than for pro bodybuilders. Hopefully this will be a wake-up call for pro bodybuilders and they will go where the market is. This will also make the job for the judges easier. If 15 out of 20 competitors on the lineup show up looking aesthetic and appealing, the winner will be out of those 15. It's the basics of the supply-and-demand economics. And as fans, magazines, and supplement companies demand more of this look, it will continue to grow and become even more popular.

I have some words for Arnold: The change has already happened, and it's called Men's Physique! Now, please, put the Men's Physique competition on the main stage at the Arnold Classic in Columbus instead of including it as an expo sideshow. If you really want to be a part of this change, you will highlight this division. You called out the fitness magazines to do our job—and *Iron Man* is doing it, just take look at our cover—now it is time to do yours.

—Binais Begovic

IRON MAN™

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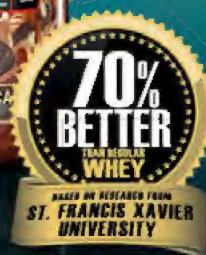
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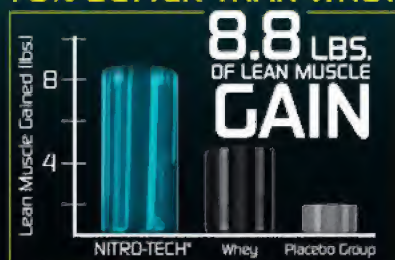
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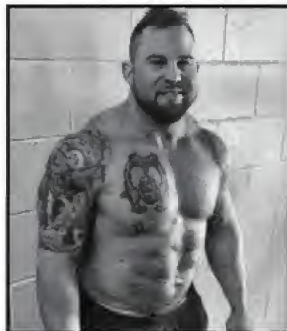
Contributors

SPECIAL THANKS



Amanda Burrill

After serving in the U.S. Navy as a rescue swimmer, Burrill obtained a culinary degree at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, a graduate degree in journalism from Columbia University, and a WSET Level 2 wine certification. She's a host for the Travel and Cooking channels and is a freelance writer, fitness model, and triathlete. Check out her adventures in travel, food, and fitness at her website apronsandsneakers.com.



Brian Carroll

Brian Carroll is one of the most accomplished powerlifters in the history of the sport. After suffering a debilitating back injury in 2012—including several broken bones—he used the principles described in his book *10/20/Life* to return to competition. He has created a community of strength and fitness experts known as Power Rack Strength. Carroll most recently competed at the 2015 Arnold Classic where he won both his class and the overall title. For more info, check out powerrackstrength.com.



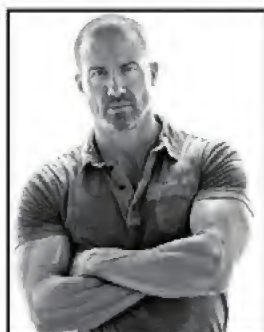
Alexander Juan Antonio Cortes

Alexander Juan Antonio Cortes is a personal trainer, choreographer, and former ballet dancer who transitioned into the fitness industry in 2009 as a personal trainer. A protégé of John Meadows at Mountain Dog Diet, he specializes in the comprehensive holistic preparation of physique athletes. He publishes a monthly column on Elitets.com covering a broad range of controversial topics in the fitness industry.



Adam Gonzalez, PhD

Adam M. Gonzalez received his PhD in Exercise Physiology at the University of Central Florida and is currently an assistant professor at Hofstra University. Gonzalez is also an NGA Natural Physique Pro. A frequent contributor to Bodybuilding.com, Gonzalez covers developments and strategies in training, nutrition, and supplementation for *Iron Man*.



Jay Campbell

Jay Campbell is a physique competitor and founder of Fabulously Fit Over 40. He is the author of the forthcoming book *The Definitive Testosterone Replacement Therapy Manual: Your Blueprint for Body, Mind and Life Optimization*. Along with wife, Monica Diaz, and Dr. Brett Osborn, he produces a twice-monthly Google hangout on hormonal optimization and longevity called Health and Vitality Secrets for the Busy Professional.



Thomas DeLauer

Thomas DeLauer is a fitness cover model who has devoted himself to living an active and healthy lifestyle without sacrificing the fun and excitement of life. Although he has the body to show some serious time in the gym, DeLauer loves the outdoors, embracing every day to its fullest, and using a fit body and a fit mind to achieve and experience things that he otherwise wouldn't be able to. DeLauer lives by what he says: "I don't live to work out, I work out to live."

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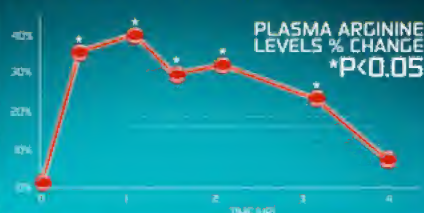
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Choline bitartrate	200mg	Zero	Zero	Undisclosed Amount
Rhodiola	100mg	Zero	Zero	Zero
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Amounts displayed in chart are based on a full dose.

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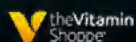
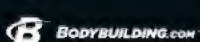
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INCREASE YOUR MUSCLE NOT YOUR GUT

TRAIN TO GAIN

● THE DEADLIFT

By Brian Carroll

Want to get big and strong throughout your whole body? Do you want traps reaching toward your ears and a back that is literally 3-D? Then you need to deadlift. In my experience, nothing will stimulate posterior chain growth, size and strength, power and sick back development like a proper deadlift. You won't build traps, rhomboids, erectors, and lats that look like a cobra without consistent deadlift training.

Form is paramount with the deadlift. Proper technique is something that needs to be built and ingrained with the lightest weights. Top to bottom, lifting 45 pounds or 800 pounds, nothing changes. The deadlifting starts with the bar on the floor. Much like the squat, everything from your toes to your ears should be tight. The deadlift is the most mentally demanding of the big three lifts, so a proper mental state is very important.

Squeeze your rhomboids and keep your lats locked down and your head in the same position as during a squat. This is what I refer to as lifter's wedge or the gorilla lean. You're pulling the slack out of the bar in the bottom of the lift as you're actively trying to bend the bar and engage your lats, setting your hips low enough to get leg drive but not too low that it pitches you forward. Every muscle is as tight as possible until you're ready to pick up the weight. Once you're ready, drive your heels through the floor while keeping the bar as close as possible to your body as you pull it up.

Many parts of the deadlift will vary from person to person with leverages or injury history influencing form and ability. Keep this in mind when setting up, especially with your hip height and with the distance away from the bar as you set your grip and prepare to pull. As always, try these tips and see what works for you and make it your own!

1. You want to have a death grip on the bar and should try to bend

it with your lats as it sits in your hands. Most lifters use an over-under grip, meaning the strong hand is over and the weak hand is under to help balance the grip. As you bend the bar, you gain leverage. The goal is to maintain as neutral a spine as possible to not only keep leverages intact but your spine as well. Locking your back in with gigantic muscles like your lats will do a great job with this.

2. Once you've gone over your mental checklist—correct distance from the bar, bending the bar with your lats, chest up, head up, hips down, pulling the slack out of the bar—you're ready to pull. This is when you stay patient but try to be as explosive as possible without yanking on the bar and turning it into a stiff-leg deadlift. Granted, some outliers pull better this way, but chances are you're not one of them.

3. To initiate the start and break the bar from the floor, simply drive your heels through the ground and squeeze the bar up. By having the slack pulled out, the bar will pop off the floor with better speed and stay closer to your body. This is something that takes practice. Jerking the bar will destroy your back and kill your lockout power.

4. As the bar comes up the shin, start pulling back. You might see some lifters actually fall backward when using a lighter weight. This means they're counterbalancing the bar to create leverage. This is a very good thing. If you get pulled forward on a heavy deadlift and go up on your toes, you'll lose the leverage and increase your chance of injury and missing the lift. Never take a weight lightly.

5. Once the bar comes across the knee, make sure to squeeze your glutes as hard as you can to push your hips through to finish the lift. Be patient, not only off the floor but at lockout. The bar has to continue moving up and cannot go down and then back up to finish the lift. This is called hitching. Squeezing the glutes will help push the hips forward.

6. Do not pull heavy every week. For that matter, you don't even need to deadlift every week. Like the squat and bench, heavy pulling has a way of taxing the body that many exercises will never touch. Use the 10/20/Life principles, and only pull heavy two out of three weeks. Having two weeks heavy and one light has a way of building positive momentum. Use the third week as a light week to recover and adjust form.

7. Don't bounce the bar when doing multiple rep sets. Set the weight down and reset and then go. The touch-and-go method has its place (mainly for assistance work), but remember, the deadlift starts in the bottom, not at the top, so treat it as such. Just like you would train the squat or bench starting from the top, you train the deadlift from a complete stop.

8. Use rows, chin-ups, and rack pulls to build your deadlift. After doing your main work for the day on the deadlift, use your assistance work to target your weak points to improve the lift. I've seen 100-pound increases in one's deadlift just from getting the upper back stronger via rows and chin-ups. (I like the eight- to 12-rep range on chin-ups and rows.)

9. Don't look down during the deadlift, as you will rob yourself of power and end up watching the bar instead of focusing on your cues. Also, never pull in front of a mirror or watch yourself squat, deadlift, or row, for that matter. These are things I learned the hard way.

10. For those who can't get into proper position with a neutral spine and use proper hip drive from the floor, I suggest that you try pulling with the weight sitting on blocks to shorten the range of motion and slowly ingrain good form. This is not all that uncommon due to injury history and mobility restrictions and or issues.

Do not be discouraged if you struggle at first, but at the same time, don't be afraid to move some heavy weight once you have mastered the proper form.



Many parts of the deadlift will vary from person to person with leverages or injury history influencing form and ability.

● LISTEN UP

by Amanda Burrill

Ten years ago, a boyfriend gave me my first set of wireless headphones. They fit snugly over my ears, a little 30-pin attachment slid into whatever model iPod I had at the time, and my life was forever changed. That pair lasted me four years (far longer than that boyfriend lasted), through hundreds of gym workouts and training for no less than 10 marathons.

Given that I've been privy to the existence of the wireless audio for a decade, I'm flabbergasted to see people at the gym, on a run, or even walking about all tangled up in wires. "Bluetooth," "hands-free," and "Wi-Fi" aren't buzzwords anymore. Wireless is the industry standard. If you haven't gone wireless, you need to get with the program. I recently tested out some bomb-dot-com wireless earbuds (and some cheap-ass duds) and I'll tell you this: The sound quality is amazing in the latest models, and the newfound mobility will set you free.

There's a ton of competition in the wireless headphone category. If you go on Groupon, you can find wireless headsets for 25 dollars. Don't bother. I tried them and they're trash. The sound quality is garbage and they're too heavy and they bounce too much when you move. Spend the extra cash because it's an investment in your workout.

Sure, there are times when functionality trumps aesthetics (condoms, sneakers, and infant car seats come to mind). I take the same stance here. I'm not trying to make my ears look amazing. I am selecting these five because I dragged them all through running, HIIT, weight training, abs, jumping jacks, and shaking my head like a madwoman, to the horror of those around me. When it comes to a secure fit, sweatproof durability, playtime per charge, and sound quality, all of these passed my tests.

I am selecting these five because I dragged them all through running, HIIT, weight training, abs, jumping jacks, and shaking my head like a madwoman, to the horror of those around me.

Powerbeats2 Wireless



Model: Powerbeats2 Wireless
Manufacturer: Beats By Dre
Price: \$200

Playback Time Per Charge: 6 hours

Why I Like Them: This lightweight set comes with different sizes of earbuds for a custom fit, and I love the over-ear design, as it reinforces the snugness. The dual-driver acoustics come through each bud, and the wraparound cord is tangle-free. There are a bunch of colors to choose from, and as an athleisure princess, I can appreciate matching gear to my outfits. Great storage case too. I can toss them in my bag and not worry about them getting damaged.

Drawbacks: The wraparound cord doesn't fold onto itself as it does in other brands. The loop of wire sticking out behind the head can be annoying if you're wearing a hoodie.

Model: iSport SuperSlim

Manufacturer: Monster

Price: \$150

Playback Time Per Charge: 5+ hours

Why I Like Them: This pair provided the most secure fit of all the models I tested, and the sound was remarkable. If you want to block out the rest of the world, these are for you. The 50-foot wireless range is impressive. You can leave your device close by and not have to worry about lugging it from place to place while you plow through your supersets.

Drawbacks: This pair also has a behind-the-head cord that doesn't fold onto itself, so ponytails and clothing can pull a bit. The carrying case is soft, so don't be careless with them.

iSport SuperSlim





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PLATINUM 100% ISO-WHEY

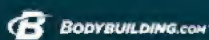
With a filtration process that reduces lactose, ash and fat, Platinum 100% Iso-Whey delivers bioactive protein fractions with the highest biological value (104 BVI) to deliver a premium protein source with more musclebuilding potential.

PLATINUM 100% CASEIN

Leading university research from France showed that subjects consuming the same dose of premium casein found in Platinum 100% Casein experienced a 34% decrease in total body protein breakdown after 7 hours.

PLATINUM 100% BEEF PROTEIN

Platinum 100% Beef Protein features the highest quality, 98% isolate protein that's 390% more concentrated than steak, and is free of fat, sugar, cholesterol and lactose.



*The American Masters of Taste, a prestigious panel of chefs and flavor experts, awarded MuscleTech® Platinum 100% Whey, Platinum 100% Iso-Whey and Platinum 100% Casein the Gold Medal for Superior Taste. Facebook logo is owned by Facebook Inc. Read the entire label and follow directions. © 2015



Model: Bluebuds X
Manufacturer: Jaybird
Price: \$170
Playback Time Per Charge: 8 hours
Why I Like Them: I've been using these for over a year with no complaints. They're streamlined and subtle enough to wear when I'm commuting too. There's a new camo option that looks pretty badass, and the wraparound cord situation on these is preferable, as nothing is left to stick out and catch on anything. They come with a nice hard case, which always gives me a warm and fuzzy feeling when I toss them into my bag.
Drawbacks: These are extremely comparable to the iSport SuperSlim in fit and feel, but I felt the iSport had slightly better sound quality.

Given that I've been privy to the existence of the wireless audio for a decade, I'm flabbergasted to see people at the gym, on a run, even walking about all tangled up in wires.



Bluebuds X

Model: Sport Pulse Wireless
Manufacturer: Jabra
Price: \$200
Playback Time Per Charge: 4.5 hours
Why I Like Them: Having a chance to really test the Sport Pulse and interact with its app has made me appreciate what Jabra has done. The built-in heart rate monitor is what sets this pair apart. If you're an endurance athlete and interested in lactate threshold or heart rate zones, go with this pair. The nice lady's voice provides in-ear coaching to help you optimize each session based on your heart rate goals.
Drawbacks: The fit is slightly less secure than the other models, but they are fully customizable, so maybe I just happened to be in between sizes.

Model: iSport Freedom
Manufacturer: Monster
Price: \$250
Playback Time Per Charge: 10 hours
Why I Like Them: This isn't an earbud but an over-ear headphone that can stand up to just about any type of movement. I took them on outdoor and treadmill runs, did handstands, and shook my head until I just gave up on them falling off. They are lightweight but snug, and the sound is amazing. The soft ear cushions are for bacteria-free comfort and can be simply wiped down. They fold up nicely for packing away, and they look pretty badass.
Drawbacks: The price is steep, but worth it. I wouldn't mind more of a color selection, but that's just me being picky.



iSport Freedom



Sport Pulse Wireless

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- Backed by research from the University of Tampa
- Results published in the journal *Nutrition & Metabolism*
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Based on research conducted at the University of Tampa and published in *Nutrition & Metabolism*.

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Full 750mg Dose of Phosphatidic Acid	✓ Certified	NON-VERIFIED	Need to take over 15g
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○ The Art of Training

by Vince DelMonte

Why workout principles matter more than sets, reps, and rest.

The beautiful thing about creating training programs is that the options are infinite and you literally get to see your knowledge and creativity manifest right before your eyes. Does this mean that all programs are created equal? Not at all. But as long as a program adheres to a few select principles, the end result can be a beautiful form of artistry.

To me, training programs are akin to what a recipe is to a chef. While a recipe may call for specific ingredients, the chef who is making the dish has the freedom of choice to add

or remove certain ingredients based on what they think will create the best end result. So while there is a structure in place, in terms of parameters to follow, the person making the food has the option to use their own creativity to spice things up.

The Recipe For Success

I've spent literally thousands of hours studying training programs over the course of my career in the hopes that

I would be able to think like the great coaches who developed them. I thought that if I developed an identical program to one of theirs, it would make me just like them—and thus I could consider myself to be as good as them.

In my effort to perfect my craft and sharpen my skills, I've come to learn that I will never be fully able to create the exact same programs as some of my mentors. But over time I began to have success with the clients I was working with who were following programs that I'd designed. Through trial and error, and my own successes, I realized that you don't need to be able to replicate the programs of those you look up to, and that if you search a little deeper, you'll find some hidden gems. These gems are the underlying principles that guide the decision making process when developing a training program. These principles are essentially the base ingredients of the recipe for success.

Knowing and understanding these principles has allowed me to use my own creativity to come up with some equally effective training programs as those written by the greats, but with ideas that are completely unique to me and my own experience. I've learned that as long as I use the right ingredients, but in varying amounts, I am able to present my clients with a five-star experience in terms of what it delivers.



Neville L. Model/Alto Kahn

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If an individual has been training consistently, using only a limited amount of exercises, focusing on proper technique and full range of motions, I'll often throw them a curveball and see how they respond.

Newell's Model: Kalleh Opara

Base Ingredients For Skinny Guys

- Train the same body part two to three times a week.
- Get strong first and then introduce a wide spectrum of rep ranges.
- Select your exercises based on balancing your body's weak links.
- Periodize either the density, volume, intensity, or frequency based on goals.
- Perform each exercise through its full and controllable range of motion.
- Focus on making micro-progressions from workout to workout.
- Apply a deload strategy.

Like any recipe, these principles are open to interpretation, but they make up the underlying foundation that I use in the beginning stages with anyone. Once an individual has a solid base of strength and an increased capacity to recruit their muscles, many of these rules can be broken. But until that point in time, these are the principles that I believe everyone should follow.

Many of you are probably thinking that you are the exception and you want to hear more about breaking the rules. I doubt that is the case, but I'll share some of the rules that I occasionally disobey. Breaking these rules is not something I do unless I feel that the my client is ready. In my experience, an individual often feels they are ready long before they truly are.

The Curveballs

- Train infrequently, as a result of doing more per workout.
- Lift light and get "pumped" first, then go heavy. In other words, focus on your 10 rep max as opposed to your one rep max.

- Divide and conquer by isolating different areas and trashing them individually.
- Limit the range of motion to the range that puts the targeted area under the most stress.

When I feel an individual is ready, I'll begin to tweak the ingredients and add a little flavor. If an individual has been training consistently, using only a limited amount of exercises, focusing on proper technique and full range of motions, I'll often throw them a curveball and see how they respond. If the individual is ready, they'll generally respond favorably. But just like in baseball, sometimes the curveball strikes them out—in this case, they weren't ready and we go right back to basics.

The purpose of the curveball is to take advantage of the strengths they've been developing, much the way a hitter would when a pitcher opts to show him something different. In this case, the fastball is the base ingredients above. If an individual has developed the capacity to recruit their muscles at will (which is the purpose of the base principles), they'll knock this curveball right out of the park.

When an individual is ready, curveballs like partial reps and isolation exercises become much more valuable. But if the person can't direct the tension onto the targeted area, there's really not a whole lot of benefit to performing a bunch of different exercises and advanced techniques that can't be felt in the first place.

These are just the principles that underline the creation of the training programs I'm developing. What I'd like you to think about is, what principles guide you in the decisions you make in terms of creating a program? What's your "fastball" and what's your "curveball," and how have you responded to it in your journey? **IM**

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3* The Ultra Recovery™ Muscle & Strength Matrix which provides advanced maximum nutritional support for enhanced recovery. Recovery is one of, if not the most important phase of training for increased muscle mass and strength...

4* TheaMax™ — Cortisol, also known as the "stress hormone" and "aging hormone" can be produced from stress in our lives and from intense training. Cortisol is in direct



opposition to your muscle and strength building goals and can actually burn your existing muscle- a bodybuilder's, athlete's or anyone's nightmare. THEA MAX™ is scientifically documented to nutritionally support reduced cortisol and protect and promote muscle and strength.

5* Healthy GH Levels Support—Beneficial to athletes and health enthusiasts...

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7* WPA2 is the Purest, Cleanest, Natural GUARANTEED MOST EFFECTIVE Whey formulation and FREE OF artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners and gluten. Many brands call their products "pure" and "clean" even though they contain artificial ingredients—this type of misinformation sends up red flags for many who are concerned about what other types of inaccuracies these brands have with other claims they make, and with the overall effectiveness of their products.

8* Best Value—Other brands highest quality Whey's are only 1.6 lbs and 1.75 lbs. 100% WHEY PRO-AMINO™ v2.0 is available in full 2 lbs. and 5 lbs. sizes and is a GUARANTEED MORE EFFECTIVE formulation and is a BETTER VALUE at a savings of over 20%.

OTHER WHEY PRODUCTS "DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS"

TOP WHEY BRANDS #2-5 ANALYSIS

Brand #2 bases its company philosophy on how "pure" their whey isolate is, when in reality it's far from pure. The facts are that their whey isolate contains artificial flavors, sweeteners and colors, including Red 40, a suspected carcinogen (a substance that may cause cancer).

Brand #3 is a good whey protein and markets their product by including a precious metal in their product name,

presumably hoping that it will make their whey product appear special. In addition, this brand states that their products are #1; the facts are that ingredients in 5 out of 6 products this brand claims to be examples of their innovation, were first implemented by HEALTHY 'N FIT®.

Brand #4 is a good whey protein; they are also an advocate of using a precious metal in their product name presumably hoping to create an impression of special quality for their whey products.

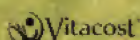
Brand #5 like Brand #2 bases their company/product philosophy on how "clean" their product is. Like Brand #2, it's not pure, clean or special.

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HUNGER GAMES

The brain is mightier than the bowl of M&Ms. Scientists from the Weight Loss Program at Mount Sinai St. Luke's Hospital in New York City found that a simple 30-second distraction technique can help you fight off junk-food cravings. In their experiment, subjects were tasked with either tapping their foot on the floor, tapping their own forehead with their finger, or staring at a blank wall when experiencing cravings for their favorite cheat foods. All three tactics significantly reduced the urge to indulge, although the forehead tapping was the most effective. When you're in a cutting phase and your willpower begins to feel weak in the face of temptation, try tapping your finger on your forehead for 30 seconds. After all, it's better to look funny for 30 seconds than to look fat for the whole summer.

MAGIC OF ALMONDS

Almonds are an especially good source of healthy fats and are loaded with fiber and protein, but since they are also loaded with calories, this nutrient-dense food is often taken off the table by anyone trying to lean out. However, almonds have long puzzled experts because their calories don't seem to translate into added body fat. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently found out why. A single serving of almonds contains over 160 calories and 14 grams of fat, but only 68 percent of those calories were actually absorbed by subjects in a test conducted by the USDA. Scientists believe that exchanging three servings of almonds for an equal number of calories derived from simple carbs and sugars could create a significant deficit of up to 150 calories a day.



FAT-FIGHTING VITAMINS

The modest multivitamin might be helping you stay lean. While it often gets beaten up by the mainstream media, an animal study conducted at two French research institutes points to new evidence that vitamin deficiencies can lead to unwanted weight gain. Scientists found that mice who were given the same number of calories over 12 weeks, but who were shortchanged on their vitamins, added more body fat than animals who received the same amount of calories but more vitamins. It seems the vitamin shortage made cells less sensitive to insulin and thus reduced fat-burning abilities in the deficient mice. A multivitamin may not seem like a sexy supplement, but there is good reason to keep it as part of your daily routine.



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STIFFER IS BETTER

When it comes to foundational strength exercises such as the deadlift, back squat, overhead press, front squat, and barbell row, the ability to maintain a stiff core is necessary to tolerate heavy loads as well as limit the risk of injury. Scientists at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, created an experiment to see what kind of training improved core stiffness the most. One group of subjects performed a dynamic movement program for six weeks, which included Russian twists, back extensions, Supermans, and lateral medicine ball throws. Another group performed isometric exercises (in which the torso does not flex or extend) such as planks, suitcase carries, bird dogs, and inverted rows. At the end of six weeks, the isometric group enhanced their core stiffness to a greater degree. Everyone loves crunches and leg raises, but don't forget the power of planks and holds.



Neyens/Model: Sergei Constance

MUSCLE D-FENSE

Over the last few years, a staggering amount of research has come to light that most people are deficient in vitamin D. Not only are low levels of vitamin D connected with various diseases and rock-bottom testosterone levels, but a new study shows that a lack of vitamin D can be cutting into your ability to build muscle. Researchers at Mahidol University in Thailand found that the subjects in their study who had higher levels of vitamin D in their systems had more muscle and lower body-fat percentages. Scientists speculate that muscle cells with little vitamin D tend to break down muscle protein at a faster rate. Since it is almost impossible to get enough vitamin D from food, and many people eschew sun exposure to protect their skin, the supplement form of the vitamin (look for D3) is an effective, inexpensive, and easy-to-find alternative.



SUGAR-FREE WORKOUTS

Sugar-laced sports drinks like Gatorade are a boon to endurance athletes. In fact, they are literally life-saving interventions for those who go long distance in the heat. But new research seems to show that if you're doing a bodybuilding-style workout of multiple sets of resistance exercises, glucose ingestion during training offers no benefit and might actually reduce your ability to generate force. A study published in *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* examined 17 male and female trained subjects and found zero performance-enhancing benefits to drinking a glucose-containing beverage during a session in the weightroom. A better idea is to spare yourself the sugary calories and opt for an intra-workout BCAA formula instead. Save the simple carbs for your post-workout protein shake.



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EAT TO GROW

A full-page photograph of a muscular man with dark hair and a light beard, wearing a grey zip-up hoodie that is open at the chest. He is drinking from a brown can of protein shake. His physique is very lean and muscular, with prominent abdominal muscles. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a gym setting with other people in the distance.

Nutrition, Supplements, Must-Haves and More

LATE-NIGHT PROTEIN

By Adam M. Gonzalez, PhD, CSCS

Stimulate protein synthesis before bed for maximum muscle building.

One of the biggest nutrition myths in our industry centers around food intake and sleep. People fear late-night eating based on the belief that our metabolism is reduced at night. This popular myth has led to the speculation that the body partitions the calories we eat toward our fat stores and away from our hungry muscle tissue. Firstly, it does not appear that overall energy expenditure during sleep is any different than during the day in non-obese individuals. Further, research published in the *Canadian Journal of Applied Physiology* shows that exercise can even increase metabolic rate and fat utilization during an overnight sleep. There is even direct evidence that consuming meals in the evening may be beneficial. A study in the *British Journal of Nutrition* found that consuming approximately 30 grams of either whey protein, casein protein, or carbohydrates prior to going to sleep equally increased resting metabolism and morning satiety. Another study, published in the journal *Obesity* reported that a six-month diet where carbohydrates were eaten mostly at dinner led to greater weight loss along with greater reductions in body fat and abdominal circumference. The evidence contradicts the myth that there is any advantage to limiting energy intake in the evening, meaning the fear of late-night eating needs to stop. On the contrary, we should be planning a proper midnight snack for optimizing body composition. For those concerned with maximizing muscle growth, consuming protein before bed may offer even further benefits.

Giving The Signal

Before making recommendations to eat a pre-sleep protein meal, we have to understand the basics of how protein ingestion can promote muscle growth. The balance between muscle protein synthesis and muscle protein breakdown governs muscle growth. When protein synthesis exceeds protein degradation, gains in muscle size can occur. Along with lifting weights, dietary protein is a major regulator for promoting muscle growth. A single high-protein meal sparks muscle

protein synthesis for up to three hours following ingestion. However, the muscle-building effect reaches a plateau following each meal, even when protein is overconsumed. This refractory response is often known as the "muscle full" effect. Hence, muscle protein synthesis appears to be regulated from meal to meal, rather than day to day. Evenly distributing protein intake across meals has shown to elevate muscle protein synthesis by up to 25 percent when compared to a more common skewed protein consumption pattern. Simply put, eating 20 to 40 grams of a high-quality protein source with a meal frequency of every three to four hours provides the best dietary stimulus for muscle growth throughout the day.

So how does all of this pertain to eating before bed? Although getting

This popular myth has led to the speculation that the body partitions the calories we eat toward our fat stores and away from our hungry muscle tissue.





fectively digested and absorbed as we sleep. A pre-bed protein snack or shake can stimulate muscle protein synthesis during this period of time when you are without food the longest. It may be that this is one of the best times to consume protein, as it can spike amino-acid levels in the blood and keep muscle protein synthesis elevated while you sleep. A study, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, examined men who lifted weights in the evening and were provided a standardized diet throughout the day. A half hour before going to sleep, they ingested a beverage containing either 40 grams of casein protein or a placebo. Drinking the protein supplement prior to bed stimulated muscle protein synthesis during seven and a half hours of sleep, effectively improving muscle protein balance overnight. What happens if

A pre-bed protein snack or shake can stimulate muscle protein synthesis during this period of time when you are without food the longest. It may be that this is one of the best times to consume protein, as it can spike amino-acid levels in the blood.

eight hours of sleep can be just as important as reaching nutritional goals for weight management and muscle growth, it also means you have to wait until morning to spark protein synthesis again. Going to bed in a fasted state may cause the body to shift into a catabolic state while you sleep—a time when you desperately need your body to shift

into recovery mode. Properly fitting a protein-rich pre-sleep snack into your daily macronutrient goal can enhance muscle protein synthesis while you sleep, leading to greater gains in muscle size.

Don't Fear PM Calories

Contrary to another popular nutrition myth, dietary nutrients are still ef-

Neyuor/Model: James Hunt

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Given that during an overnight sleep you will remain fasted, the benefits of consuming protein before sleep may even outweigh other feeding times during the day.

you add a pre-bed protein shake to your diet each night? A study in *The Journal of Nutrition* showed that a late-night meal containing 28 grams of protein and 15 grams of carbohydrates significantly improved gains in muscle size and strength when consumed regularly during 12 weeks of resistance training.

While protein consumption throughout the day is essential for keeping muscle protein synthesis elevated, protein ingestion before sleep offers many benefits for promoting muscle growth. Given that during an overnight sleep you will

remain fasted, the benefits of consuming protein before sleep may even outweigh other feeding times during the day. As long as nighttime eating does not disrupt your normal sleep cycle, the benefits of fitting a late-night meal into your daily macro-nutrient goals outweigh any associated risks. For example, if you eat 180 grams of protein per day, then save 30 grams for your pre-sleep meal. Evenly distribute the other 150 grams over however many meals you consume throughout the day. Choose high-quality protein sources including lean meats, fish, eggs,

dairy, and whey protein. Slower-digesting proteins such as casein or egg may be the best options before bed, as they will slowly release amino acids into the bloodstream keeping muscle protein synthesis elevated for longer into the night. These sources include casein protein supplements, milk proteins and whole foods such as Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, and lean meats. Whether you are looking to maintain your muscle mass or pack on some extra bulk, allotting protein for your midnight snack may prove to be very beneficial. **IM**



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TURN UP THE HEAT

By Gabriel Wilson, PhD, CSCS

A West African botanical can help you throw more fat on the fire.



The most basic concept for weight loss is balancing caloric intake with caloric expenditure. If you consume less than you burn, you'll lose weight; and if you eat more than you burn, you'll pack the pounds on. Unfortunately, it's not always this simple. The harder you diet and exercise, the more your body resists you. Soon the same diet that initially promoted fat burning and weight loss gains will result in weight maintenance or even weight gain. This is a consequence of a slowed metabolism, and there is nothing more frustrating to a fitness enthusiast.

Recognizing this weight-loss impediment, scientists have searched for ways to boost metabolic rate. Most think that turning up the heat is important for maintaining a high metabolism, but it may be just the opposite. Research shows that the metabolism of animals is dramatically higher during the winter months and in response to cold exposure. Furthermore, recent groundbreaking research shows that people who simply sleep in slightly colder environments can significantly boost their metabolic rates. This makes sense, as maintaining a precise body temperature is crucial to our very survival.

Shivering is your body's most basic way of maintaining heat during cold exposure, but the body also has a typically

dormant, untapped metabolic pathway that preferentially burns fuel as heat. This is called non-shivering thermogenesis. The organ that operates this system is brown adipose tissue (BAT), and its activation may be the key to permanent weight loss. To elaborate, when your body starts to get cold, your brain senses this and releases signals that communicate and activate your BAT. When BAT is activated, it increases uncoupling protein 1 (UCP-1), which turns on the entire BAT fat-burning system. When UCP-1 is increased in BAT, you rapidly start to burn body fat. To put this in simple terms, when your fat tissue takes up nutrients, it typically uses them to produce ATP (energy) that can be stored for later use. But UCP-1 essentially disables this process. Instead, UCP-1 targets these calories and literally burns them off as heat, resulting in an increase in metabolism, thereby warming your body during cold stress.

Consequently, research shows that BAT activity is higher in lean individuals versus overweight ones. It also declines as we age and decreases with prolonged dieting. The implications are that BAT activity in our bodies, or the lack thereof, may explain why we hit diet plateaus and why some people struggle with weight loss more than others.

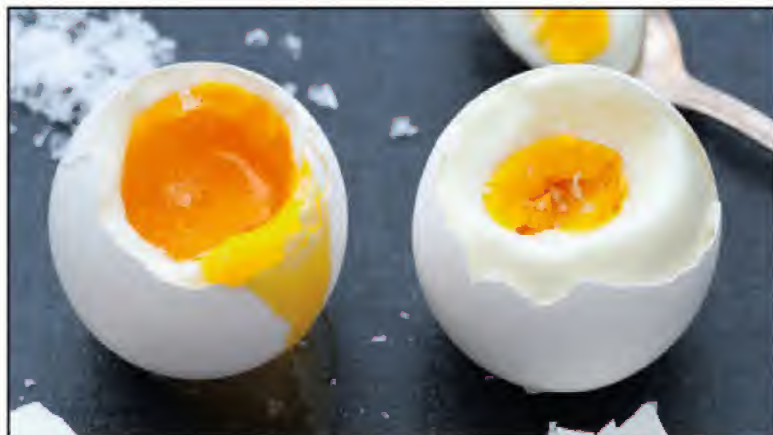
Since its discovery, scientists have been seeking ways to activate dormant BAT in humans, but with little success. Recently, however, a West African plant called Grains

of Paradise (GOP) was discovered. GOP is rich in the BAT-activating compound 6-paradol. In two clinical trials, humans supplementing with this plant extract experienced significant improvements in metabolic rate and fat loss, and these results were shown to be dependent on activation of BAT.

BAT activation holds tremendous promise for athletes and fitness enthusiasts looking to get lean and ripped. The repeated findings of GOP as a BAT-activating supplement are significant and may give you the power to unlock this unique metabolic fat-burning pathway. But how do you harness the power of GOP in the concentration and potency necessary to provide the fat-torching benefits you're seeking? Fortunately, you don't have to travel to West Africa to find this highly prized metabolism booster.

A groundbreaking formula called Phenbuterol from MuscleMeds contains a clinically efficacious dose of GOP that is standardized to be extremely potent in its most active compound, 6-paradol. Now you can activate the dormant BAT pathway and literally force your body to burn fat with Phenbuterol. In addition, select active ingredients in this potent formula also exert powerful energizing and mood enhancing effects to help take the edge off dieting.

GREAT WHITE HYPE?



The egg-white omelet is so deeply ingrained in bodybuilder culture, it is almost unthinkable to reassess this classic choice of breakfast. But it might be time to break the habit when it comes to breaking shells.

Research published in the journal *Metabolism* shows that including whole eggs into a moderately carbohydrate-restricted diet (25 to 30 percent of total calories) improves insulin sensitivity and levels of plasma insulin as compared to those subjects who ate egg whites.

Why not use the whole egg? While egg whites are made up of highly bioavailable protein, they are bankrupt when it comes to nutrients. On the other hand, the yolk contains valuable fat-soluble vitamins, such as A, E, D, and K, as well as calcium, magnesium, iron, selenium, and the antioxidant carotenoids, lutein, and zeaxanthin.

OPTIMISTIC ON URSOLIC ACID

A few months ago, the first human studies were completed on ursolic acid, a natural substance found in rosemary and apple peels that has shown promise for boosting health and improving body composition in animals. Scientists in Korea gave subjects experienced in weight training 450 milligrams of ursolic acid a day for eight weeks. The researchers were expected to see a dramatic uptick in muscle mass; while subjects did gain some muscle mass, the scientists were surprised to find that the most dramatic effect was on fat loss as well as strength. Scientists hypothesized that ursolic acid supplementation boosted the concentration of IGF-1 and irisin, a protein that muscle cells secrete when they are active.



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STRONG IS FAST

Is there a more badass combination than having both a heavy squat and a fast sprint? An article published in *The Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* showed that athletes who could perform at least one back squat with 2.1 times their bodyweight or more were able to sprint faster than those who were not able to manage that load on the bar. The relationship was stronger for a 37-meter sprint than a nine-meter sprint. This is just more evidence that strength training is a cornerstone of developing well-rounded physical abilities. Famous strength coach Mark Rippetoe puts it another way: "Strong people are harder to kill than weak people, and more useful in general."



OBESE IS STILL NOT HEALTHY

The phrase "fat shaming" has been in the news a lot lately. Support groups have popped up to say that overweight individuals can still be healthy and fit even if they don't look like Sadik Hadzovic or Amanda Latona. It's great to be happy with yourself, but let's not assume that all weights are created equal.

A study published in *The Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* found a strong correlation between well-developed cardiorespiratory fitness and desirable body composition. The study looked at the performance of over 4,200 Brazilian policemen and firefighters on various fitness tests. They found that those officers who were the leanest had the best scores in cardio conditioning, irrespective of age. You might be able to be overweight without being unhealthy, but losing weight will clearly improve your physical performance, intensity, and overall quality of life.

STRENGTH FOR THE WIN

Noted researcher and fitness expert Brad Schoenfeld recently completed a study in which he looked at the effects of light loads and high reps versus heavy loads and low reps. Two groups of trained subjects performed three sets of seven exercises three times a week.

The first group used light weights and performed 25 to 35 reps per set. The second group used a heavier load that allowed them to complete eight to 12 reps. After eight weeks, both groups experienced significant and similar levels of muscle growth. However, the group who pushed heavier weights gained far more strength. The high-rep groups did enjoy greater gains in endurance, but ultimately building more strength will bring about greater changes to your body more quickly. Progressing in the loads you are able to push is a more potent stimulus for change than 30, 40, or even 50 reps of the same weight.



THE WHEY TO MORE MUSCLE



After years of being pilloried, mainstream nutrition scientists are now admitting that a high-protein diet provides a plethora of benefits—and not just for gym rats. A recent study published in the *Journal of Food Science* took it one step further and examined several different protein types for their ability to improve body composition, spare muscle during caloric restriction, and combat the natural loss of muscle that occurs with aging. The researchers concluded that whey protein, with its rich leucine content (which is responsible for triggering muscle protein synthesis), fast digestibility, and amino-acid profile, is superior to casein and soy when it comes to building and preserving muscle mass. While casein and soy do have their usefulness, if you only use one catchall protein powder, the science seems to point to whey as your best choice.

CACAO MELTS FAT

Recent Japanese research points to cacao powder as a fat-burning superfood with lots of promise. Cacao is loaded with flavonoids, and one in particular, known as flavan-3-ols, seems to boost the production of enzymes involved in burning fat. When you're making your daily protein shake, try throwing in a couple tablespoons of raw cacao powder, which has more active ingredients than other forms of cocoa. Two tablespoons of the stuff has only 40 calories, with two grams of fiber and two grams of protein.



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○ Set The Right Pace

by Thomas DeLauer

Bulking and cutting phases might work for heavyweight bodybuilders, but it's better for physique athletes to stay lean all year.



over into day-to-day life. In an effort to build the perfect body, many of us go to hardcore dieting techniques and sometimes forget that there is an alternative to the extreme bulking and cutting mentality that occurs within the competitive fitness community.

Recently, I have seen many fitness models and competitors jumping on a trend that I find to be a much healthier approach and one that provides a more sustainable outcome. This trend is staying lean 365 days per year rather than blowing up and then crash dieting for a given event. It seems as though the appeal of being in shape year-round is beginning to supersede that of being a bit softer in the winter and lean only in the summer or around contests.

From a purely mental standpoint, being in shape year-round provides exceptional benefits. When you're feeling confident, it gives you the ability to conquer more in your daily life than you would if you were feeling self-conscious about your appearance. The problem with the traditional bulking and cutting approach is that the contrast of one condition to the other can sometimes leave you feeling a bit depressed or at the very least, with lower self-esteem. If you're ripped all summer, but then you shift into bulking season, it can be difficult to watch the six-pack

I've always believed that in order to be an excellent athlete you have to be a bit extreme. To become pro level at anything, you have to possess qualities that may seem a bit abnormal to society at large. Late-night practices, constant pursuit of perfection, and strict diets carve out a very specific label that many of us as high performance or aesthetic athletes carry with us.

But interestingly enough, it seems that in the world of bodybuilding and fitness, the extreme mentality can carry

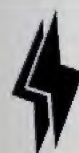
disappear and consequently leave you feeling a bit down.

Of course, staying lean consistently comes with its own mental pitfalls as well. We all know it means committing to a strict diet, and that isn't always fun. Certain foods give us a dopamine response that makes us feel good, and without having a few meals to provide that, we can get disheartened. From a hormonal standpoint as well, excessive dieting can cause an increase in cortisol. This undesirable hormone can make us feel anxious, depressed, and fa-

Eric Wainwright / Model: Thomas DeLauer

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Adil Hattoui

One of the many reasons that bodybuilders and physique competitors enjoy the bulking and cutting method is the rebound effect that occurs when making the sudden switch from a diet phase into a bulking phase.

tigued. The best way to combat both of these roadblocks is to allow yourself a cheat meal one time per week. This lets you get a bit of a dopamine surge from your favorite food as well as helps blunt the excess cortisol that is on the rise from dieting.

One of the many reasons that bodybuilders and physique competitors enjoy the bulking and cutting method is the rebound effect that occurs when making the sudden switch from a diet phase into a bulking phase. What is meant by "rebound" is that the body experiences a dramatic anabolic effect when it switches gears out of diet mode. The body becomes exceptionally receptive to nutrients, and certain hormone responses elicit a tremendous surge in muscle

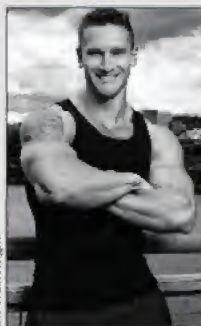
growth that can carry on for one to two weeks. However, I don't feel that sending your body into anabolic overdrive for one week is worth the negative health benefits of eating everything in sight for an extended period.

You can still achieve a rebound effect on a year-round clean diet by simply introducing appropriately placed cheat meals throughout your clean diet. It is the "binging" mentality that gets athletes into trouble, so just be sure to exercise control. When you schedule your cheat meals, try to orient them around larger muscle group exercise days. For example, schedule a cheat meal after a hard leg workout so that you can obtain the largest benefit from the workout and the meal. By adding cheat meals, you not only keep yourself sane throughout the dieting process, but you actually can build muscle while staying lean!

If you're looking to stay lean year-round for your own cosmetic goals, I would recommend staying about three weeks out from your top condition. This way you're not maintaining an unhealthy body-fat percentage, but you're still close enough to be ready for any event. Remember, your body needs some adipose tissue to regulate hormones like testosterone, so do not to attempt to stay at three percent body fat all year. If you attempt to stay exceptionally lean for 12 straight months, you can do some metabolic damage, making it harder to lose fat in the future.

In this world, it is always a give and take; you can either give up your freedom to eat in lieu of abs all year, or you can give up the abs to enjoy some scrumptious food. I feel there is a happy medium between those two places. At the end of the day, we all have to keep in mind that this is about health, because without a healthy body, there is no six-pack, there is no working out, and there are no competitions. So make the choice that is going to allow you to lead a healthy life, yet still be far above average and setting the pace for those who aspire to be like you! **IM**

Pro Tip: Over time, you learn to read your body and determine when you should implement a cheat meal or engage in more aggressive dieting practices. I recommend using areas of your body that are the first to accumulate body fat as your gauge. For me, I notice it in my lower back, and if I find that I am accumulating more than what is desirable for my current look, then I throttle down on the diet a bit more. Another good indicator is the face. Your face will tell all when it comes to current nutrition and overall level of leanness. Generally speaking, the jawline begins to disappear early on in the bulking phase, so an honest glance in the mirror a couple times per week can be a great indicator of when to rein it in.



Eric WarmWright

Thomas DeLauer is an accomplished fitness cover model who has devoted himself to living an active and healthy lifestyle without sacrificing the fun and excitement of life. Although he has the body to show some serious time in the gym, he embraces every day to its fullest, using a fit body and a fit mind to achieve his goals and experience new things. DeLauer lives by what he says: "I don't live to work out, I work out to live."

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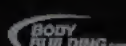
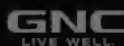
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IRON MAN ON A MISSION

Model, coach, and international entrepreneur, OZ's Sonny Brown is out to conquer an entire continent—and then the world.

By Binaís Begovic Photography by Per Bernal

I've always admired people who are passionate and devoted to what they do. I still remember my fourth-grade biology teacher who had this unique energy when he walked into the room and started teaching. His passion about science quickly spread through the class, and even the least interested students would listen. I've been in the fitness industry for over 17 years, and I have felt this kind of energy only three times: once with pro bodybuilder-turned-coach Milos Sarcev, a second time with the late great fitness model Greg Plitt, and most recently when I walked into Gold's Gym, Venice during Sonny Brown's photo shoot for *Iron Man* magazine. Sonny was giving every last molecule of himself in front of that camera, and he loved every second of it. I couldn't wait to share his story with you.

RAW



Binais Begovic: Where did you grow up?

Sonny Brown: I was born in Portugal. My mum is from New Zealand, and my father is from England. I was born in Portugal because my father was working with a business that was based in Portugal at the time. Growing up was awesome. The weather in Portugal is very similar to California, so my family would spend plenty of time outdoors and at the beach. The Mediterranean diet that I grew up on has a lot to do with how I still eat and cook today.

BB: Do you come from an athletic family?

SB: From my first memories my mum loved horse riding, which wasn't really my thing, but my dad was a big fan of football [soccer]. My father is from London, England, and supported Arsenal FC, so I always took an interest in football, but my real passion was bodyboarding.

BB: Were you a good student and athlete growing up?

SB: I loved school up until the age of around nine. I enjoyed the structure of it all, but my parents split up and I moved to New Zealand, England, and then finally Australia. I found my energy was most suited to bodyboarding, athletics, sprinting, football, and basically anything that didn't mean I had to sit still listening to long multiplications.

BB: Was that a tough time in your life—divorce, a move across the globe?

SB: After the divorce, we moved to Australia when I was nine. My mother's parents lived in Australia, and my father moved back to England. I didn't think of it much as a young kid. I wanted to play sports and be in the ocean. As I became older, I realized I missed having my father around, but most of the guys I grew up with were in the same situation.

BB: Who were your first heroes?

SB: My number one inspiration from a young age was my father. The guy continues to show me what a real work ethic looks like. I was heavily involved with bodyboarding as an Australian champion, and I looked up to the world champion at the time, who was Ben Player.

BB: How was your relationship with your parents when growing up?

SB: My relationship was okay with my parents. I would love to say it was the perfect upbringing, but it wasn't. My



"THE BLUEPRINT IS SIMPLE: FIND SOMETHING YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT AND DON'T LOOK BACK."



Sonny Brown

Name: Sonny Brown

Age: 29

Height: 5'9"

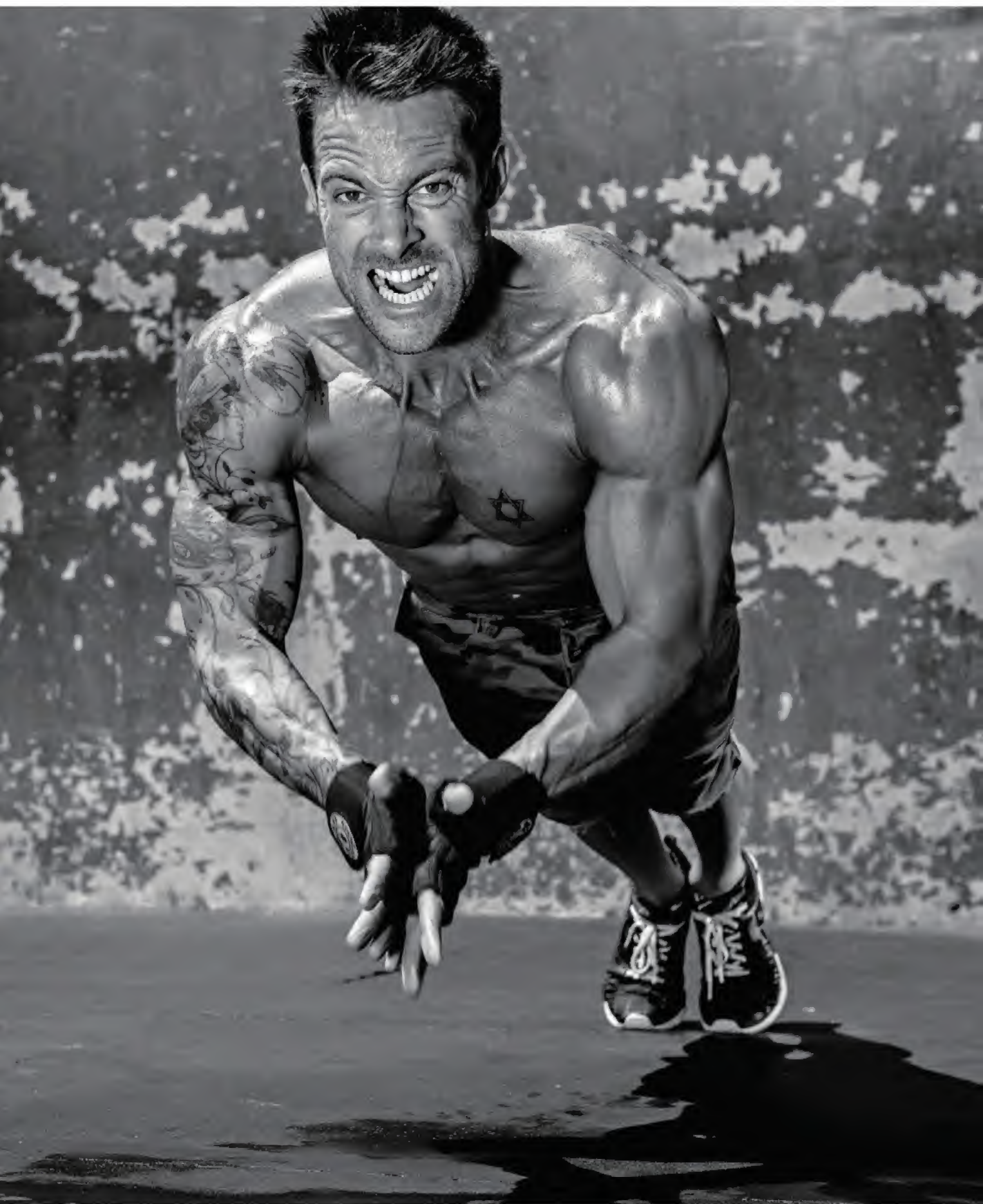
Weight: 175 lbs

Lives: Gold Coast, Australia and Venice Beach, California

Occupation: Fitness model, coach, investor, and business owner

Relationship: Engaged

Website: greaterhealth.com.au



mum brought me up along with my two sisters. She worked hard to provide the best she could for all of us. My father was living in England with my older brother, who I thought of regularly and at times found it tough to be so far away from him.

BB: When did you reconnect with your dad?

SB: There was a time in my life where I was no longer bodyboarding, school was finished, and before I knew it I was hanging around some scary figures doing some crazy shit. I ended up in a fight one night as a 17-year-old, and the domino effect this had on the next few years of my life was crazy. I was put on probation for six months after spending some time away from society, and my mum and I decided I would move to England to live with my father. This was a life-changing experience. This is where I went from a boy to a man and witnessed what a real work ethic looked like from my father.

BB: How was the transition from bodyboarding to bodybuilding?

SB: I remember keeping a bodyboarding journal for a year straight when I was 15. On the first of January that year, I said to myself, "I don't care how big or small the conditions are, for a year straight I will surf every day this year." And I did. I've never had a problem committing to something, and if I commit, it's going to be 150 percent. When I started lifting weights, I incorporated the same mindset: "Sonny, you will not miss sessions until you are happy." Well, I'm still not happy, and I have not missed one day of training since I started lifting weights eight years ago. That is why I love bodybuilding, fitness, powerlifting, power bodybuilding, whatever you want to call it. If you train every day and follow some form of nutritional plan, you will reach your wildest dreams, in any industry. The blueprint is simple: Find something you are passionate about and don't look back.

BB: Is this your first cover for an international magazine?

SB: This is my first international cover, and I'm very humbled and super grateful. This is more than an international cover, though. I have bought



and followed *Iron Man* for years. My idols have landed this cover, and I know as long as I stay true to being me, I will continue to reach a wider audience of like-minded individual I can help. I am living my dreams!

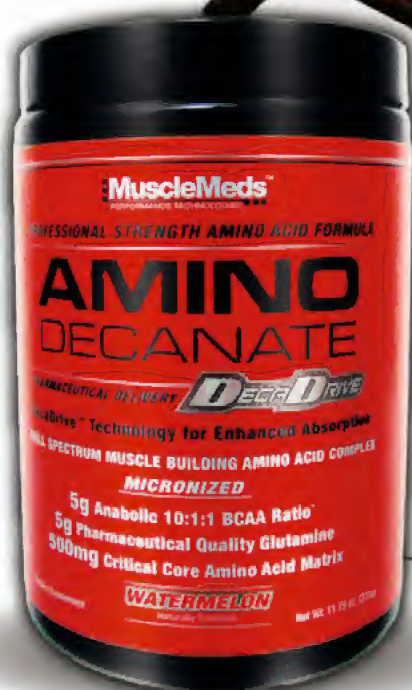
BB: How did you get started in fitness?

SB: My passion from a young age was to be an athlete or coach. I have always loved all sports. The first diet I ever did was at 22 years old and went from 83 kilograms [183 pounds] to 73 kilograms [161 pounds] in just over seven weeks. I was doing sprints on the beach one morning when this guy approached me and asked if I had

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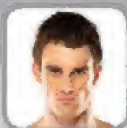


"IF YOU DON'T THINK ABOUT GIVING UP, YOU'RE NOT WORKING HARD ENOUGH IN MY WORLD."

done any fitness modeling and gave me his card. He ended up shooting me the following week, and I was featured in a bronzed Aussie boys calendar. I continued to work with local photographers and was featured in Australia's top women's fitness mag as a man of the month. As my vision of what I wanted from fitness became clearer, I started flying to L.A. to shoot and train with the best in the world. Fitness is an essential part of who I am. Any accolades I achieve along the way are all a bonus.

BB: How did you prepare for this shoot?

SB: The main goal for me has always been to stay close to shoot shape, but getting prepared for this shoot I had been running a calorie surplus, so I had to change a few protocols. I carb cycled for roughly eight weeks and kept lifting heavy weights throughout my preparation. I also did sprint training session three times a week in the morning, which were on my high-carb day.



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EPIQ™ ATHLETE
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BB: You run a very successful personal training business back in Australia. Is it mostly online?

SB: My fiancée, Melissa, and I are so proud of all the positive feedback we've had from our clients and other professionals in the industry. When we started our business, it was primarily one-on-one personal training. Fast-forward three years later and we're working with people all over the world and have found a niche in competition preparation. We both work very closely with a range of clients both in and out of the gym.

BB: How does it feel to transform people's lives?

SB: I like to think that any client I work with did the work. I gave them the information and held them accountable, but they were the ones who trained and ate the food. I don't care about a client's genetics; I care about their heart. I love working with dedicated clients who don't have excuses but simply want to be better.

I LOVE WORKING WITH DEDICATED CLIENTS WHO DON'T HAVE EXCUSES BUT SIMPLY WANT TO BE BETTER.

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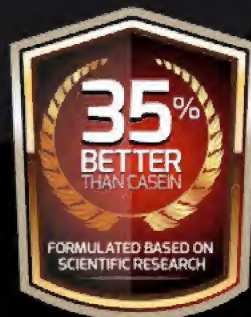
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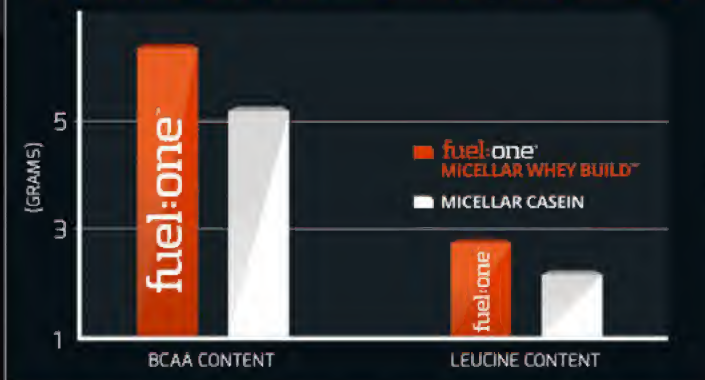
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SPORTIKA



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BB: Let's talk about your training and diet. Can you break down a typical week in your life?

SB: My typical week changes very consistently, but I will give you an idea of how last week looked for me. I wake up daily around five a.m. I'll drink my morning coffee whilst doing social media and having a quick look over my emails. I'll get my first two meals organized for the first half of my day and get down to the gym to train my clients and myself. I'll finish at the gym around one p.m. when I return home to my apartment/office and do all my online work. I'll write clients



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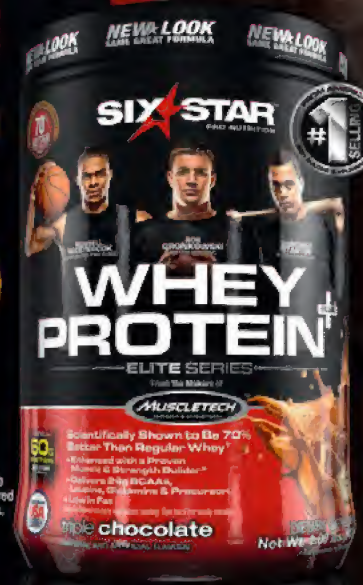
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training and meal programs, answer emails, check my website, social media, submit images, write articles, and reach out to other professionals. I train seven days a week and rest when my body tells me I need it. My rest day involves walking, swimming, and lots of stretching.

BB: How do you manage to stay in shape when you're so busy?

SB: I've found that my eating habits revolve around my workday. I'm usually up around five a.m. and asleep at 10 p.m., so I eat my biggest meal at the start of the day, which is oatmeal, fruit, and eggs. I'll eat another meal four hours later and have a post-training shake with fruit, which leaves me one to two meals to prepare at night.

BB: How do you deal with hardships and negativities in life?

SB: I look back at my past and think to myself how far I've come and what I've achieved. Many men around me have failed because they let their anger, ego, frustration, and pain take them down. I go to the gym and work that energy off, and I don't leave until I'm in real pain. I exhaust my body of that emotion.

BB: Ever felt like giving up?

SB: Too many times to mention. If you don't think about giving up, you're not working hard enough in my world.

BB: What are the biggest differences when it comes to the U.S. fitness industry and Australia's?

SB: The size of the American industry is huge! The U.S. has 322 million people, Australia has 22 million, so the opportunities that the American industry can offer are of a bigger scale. We are definitely catching up, and I believe the Australian market will continue to grow and be a force to reckon with in the future.

BB: I'm coming to Australia to swim with some great whites. You have to promise me a private class in bodyboarding.

SB: It would be awesome to see you out here next year, and I promise to give you a private bodyboarding class, and then we can go swim with the great whites, ride kangaroos, and throw a shrimp on the 'barbie. **IM**



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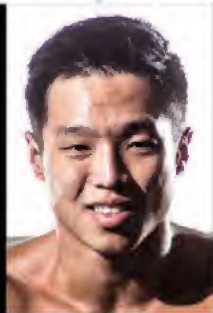
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FAST



Joseph Lee

Age: 27

Lives: Orange County, CA

Profession: Field representative

Likes: Nice and considerate people

Dislikes: Kale chips

Drives: Chevy Traverse

Wants To Drive: Lamborghini Aventador

Listens to: All kinds of music

Favorite diet food: Rice and grilled chicken with sugar-free barbecue sauce

Favorite cheat food: Pizza and doughnuts

Favorite vacation spot: Alaska

Gym or Cardio? Gym

Chicken or Steak? Steak



@joemonji

Overtraining can beat you up and leave you injured. But done strategically, it can also get you into peak shape in record time, while making some of the best short-term gains of your life.

Building muscle is a long-term process. Tissue can only be added so fast, and muscular density is developed from thousands upon thousands of repetitions. For those who want an aesthetic physique, patience is part of the game.

That said, there are times when planned overtraining can deliver phenomenal short-term improvements. While you cannot “train insane” every day, there are periods where absolutely blasting it in the gym can kick you out of a rut and spur improvements in both muscle mass and strength.

Within exercise science, the term for this planned overtraining is called “overreaching” and refers to distinct periods of time in which training volume, intensity, and frequency are increased for the purpose of shocking your physiology into improvement.

TIME TO TRIPLE UP

This program works on a compressed time frame. That means training is going to be put into overdrive. Specifically, we are going to utilize three different training methods all at once to push the intensity of the workouts. Over six weeks, you'll dramatically transform your physique through a carefully periodized plan that has you training all out every session, but which ceases before the point of burnout or injury.

These strategies we'll be using are compensatory acceleration training (CAT), relative strength method, and giant sets:

Compensatory Acceleration Training:

Formalized by the famous sports scientist Dr. Fred Hatfield, this method focuses on moving weights with maximal acceleration on every single rep. Similar to the concept of the Dynamic Effort method created by Louie Simmons of Westside Barbell, CAT focuses on power and strength development with your working weights. CAT sets are all about speed and explosiveness. If you're doing a bench press on a CAT day, the bar will come down slowly but should explode off your chest and reach the end of its range of motion as quickly as possible. On these sets, you will always stop short of grinding out reps or using a weight that is so heavy it makes you slow.

Relative Strength:

This simply refers to using your own bodyweight as resistance. While bodyweight movements are sometimes dismissed as being ineffective for building muscle, they can have a hypertrophic effect. Since they're less taxing on the joints than free weights, you can also perform them at a higher volume and more frequently. Because they can be done for very high reps, they can be used for HIIT and have a metabolic effect when incorporated into training. To become stronger relative to your weight, your body must also shed extraneous tissue. Developing relative strength will also have positive carryover with all your traditional lifting exercises.

Giant Sets:

Giant sets are performed in circuit fashion but are bodypart specific, designed to use complementary exercises for the same muscle group in sequence. Giant sets enable you to lift “giant” amounts of volume within a compact time frame. This elevates the metabolic factors of the workout, creating a powerful stimulus that can develop hypertrophy and help shed excess body fat.

GAINS

CONTROLLED OVERTRAINING CAN LEAD TO DRAMATIC SHORT-TERM RESULTS.

BY ALEXANDER CORTES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MICHAEL NEVEUX

SIX-WEEK ASSAULT

Over the next six weeks, you will be training six days a week, working a three-day bodypart split. Over the course of the week, every muscle group will be trained twice. You will alternate between CAT days for power and strength, and giant set days for massive metabolic disruption. Sprinkled throughout will be relative strength bodyweight work, along with regular repetition work.

The main concept here is to blast through every workout. Don't worry about increasing the weights. Rather, aim for moving the same weights for more reps and more quickly, with control and authority. The idea here is to maximize speed and volume. Add reps and sets before adding weight to any one exercise. Take as little rest as possible. Rest only as long as you need to perform the next set, and then start again at full bore.

MONDAY: QUADS/HAMSTRINGS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
CAT		
Back Squat <i>superset with</i>	5	5
Double Kettlebell Swing	5	10
Barbell Jump Squat	6	3
Stiff-Legged Dumbbell Deadlift	3	15
Leg Press Drop-Set	5	40-20-10 (each set)
Explosive Standing Calf Raise	4	5

TUESDAY: CHEST/BACK

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
CAT		
Incline Barbell Press	5	5
Bent-Over Barbell Row	5	5
Dumbbell Squeeze Press <i>superset with</i>	4	15
Hammer Strength Row	4	15
Dumbbell Bench Press	3	12
Bent-Over Dumbbell Row	3	10
Close-Grip Lat Pulldown	3	12
Incline Dumbbell Flye	3	15

BARBELL JUMP SQUAT →

Stand in a conventional squatting position with a barbell on your back, your feet at shoulder width, and your hands gripping the bar tightly. Push your hips back and descend into a parallel squat with your head and chest up. Explode from this bottom position into a jump, then land softly and descend into another squat in a smooth, controlled motion.

TRAINING SPLIT

MONDAY: Quads/Hamstrings (CAT)

TUESDAY: Chest/Back (CAT)

WEDNESDAY: Shoulders/Arms (Relative Strength + Giant Set)

THURSDAY: Quads/Hamstrings (Relative Strength + Giant Set)

FRIDAY: Chest/Back (Relative Strength + Giant Set)

SATURDAY: Shoulders/Arms (CAT)

SUNDAY: Off Day





BENT-OVER BARBELL ROW

With a loaded barbell on the floor, hinge at the hips and bend forward so the bar is directly under your navel with your torso close to parallel to the floor. Grasp the bar outside shoulder width, then pull it to your navel. Hold for a second, then return to the start position with the bar hanging a few inches off the floor.

WEDNESDAY: SHOULDERS/ARMS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Supinated Close-Grip Chin-Up	4	AMAP*
superset with Close-Grip Triceps Push-Up	4	AMAP*

Giant Set: 3 rounds with movements performed in sequence

Seated Machine Shoulder Press	10
Triceps Pushdown	15
Seated Dumbbell Curl	10
Dumbbell Lateral Raise	20

* As many as possible

THURSDAY: QUADS/HAMSTRINGS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Sumo Deadlift	3	10
Bodyweight Split Squat	3	10-20
45-Degree Hyperextension	3	20

Giant Set: 3 rounds with movements performed in sequence

Bodyweight Squat	20
Lateral Lunge	12 (each leg)
Bodyweight Reverse Lunge	10 (each leg)
Bodyweight Jump Squat	15



SUPINATED CLOSE-GRIP CHIN-UP ↑

Grasp an overhead bar with your hands in an underhand grip (palms facing you) wider than your shoulders. Let your body hang from the bar. Without swinging or using momentum, use your lats and biceps to pull your chin over the bar. Hold for a second, then slowly return to the start position.

THE SCIENCE OF THE TRIPLE THREAT

This training program is designed to create a powerful short-term anabolic effect, not a long-term change. With that in mind, this is not a year-round training program that you repeat over and over. In exercise science terminology, we're creating an acute response. This will require intense exposure and application of stimulus. That means you're in for some punishing workouts.

Why does blasting hard work so well for building muscle? The initial response of a body to an increase in volume and frequency

CONT. ON PAGE 67



SUMO DEADLIFT ↑

Position your feet in a very wide stance under a loaded Olympic bar. Squat down and grasp the bar between your legs with a mixed grip that is about shoulder width. Face forward with your arms extended, chest high, hips low, and back straight. Pull the bar up by driving your feet outward and bringing your chest up. Extend your knees once the bar passes your kneecaps. At the top of the lift, when your torso is upright, drive your shoulders back and chest up. Return the weight to the floor by bending your hips while keeping your knees pointed outward, chest high, and back straight.

A full-page photograph of a very muscular man, Raynor Whitecombe, standing in a gym. He is shirtless, showing his highly defined pectoral, abdominal, and arm muscles. He is holding a large dumbbell with both hands in front of his waist. The background is dark and out of focus, showing gym equipment.

FINISH SOMETHING

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BARBELL HANG HIGH PULL

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, letting a loaded barbell hang at your waist with your hands inside the width of your shoulders. Drive your elbows back and to the sides as you raise the barbell as high as you can in a straight line, then carefully allow the bar to return to the start (hanging) position.

FRIDAY: CHEST/BACK

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Supinated Close-Grip Chin-up	5	6-12
superset with V-Bar Dip	5	8-15

Giant Set: 4 rounds with movements performed in sequence

Push-Up (moderate grip)	AMAP
Inverted Row	AMAP
Wide-Grip Pull-Up	AMAP
Deficit Push-Up	15

SATURDAY: SHOULDERS/ARMS

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
CAT		
Single-Arm Dumbbell Snatch	6	3
Strict Barbell Curl	5	5
Push Press	5	4
Close-Grip Plyo Push-Up	5	5
superset with Bench Press	5	6
Barbell Hang High Pull	3	12
Seated Dumbbell Hammer Curl	3	10
Triceps Pushdown	3	20

PUSH PRESS →

With your feet shoulder-width apart, your knees slightly bent, and your hands in an overhand grip at shoulder width, sit a loaded barbell on your front delts. Dip down with your legs, then use your lower body to drive the bar overhead to a locked-out position slightly behind your head. Keep your elbows facing directly forward throughout the range of motion.



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SEATED DUMBBELL HAMMER CURL

Sit on the end of the bench with your feet flat on the floor and your knees together. Pick the dumbbells up and let them hang by your sides with your palms facing your body (neutral grip). Bend your arms slightly to take up the tension into your biceps. Keeping your back straight and your elbows tucked in at your sides, slowly curl the dumbbells at the same time until tension comes off the muscle.



is to overcompensate its adaptive mechanism. For a short period of time, your metabolism will be highly elevated and your recovery will increase to accommodate the training stimulus. This is a natural response to stress. Instead of making you slow down, your physiology will focus upon surviving and overcoming the stress you're placing upon it.

This effect quickly subsides, however, usually when the stress continues past four to six weeks. And beyond the six- or seven-week mark, metabolism will start to gradually dip as your body tells you to slow down and stop expending so much energy.

This creates a window of opportunity to build some muscle and even shed some body fat at the same time. Hence why this program is six weeks in length.

By creating an acute effect through the right type of training, your physiology will be "shocked" into rapidly adapting. And you'll emerge looking the sharpest you've ever looked within such a short period of time. **IM**



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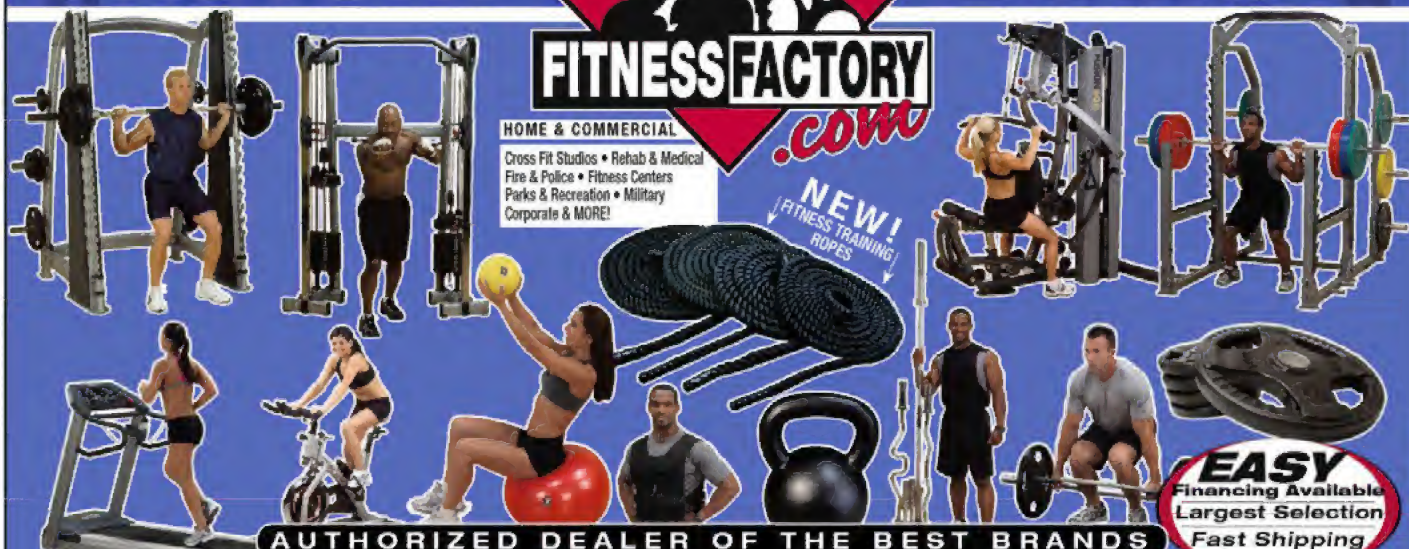
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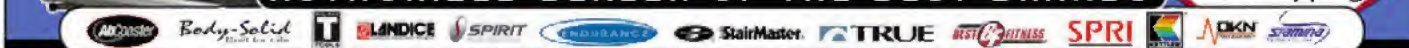
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BY ADAM M. GONZALEZ, PHD, CSCSPHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL NEVEUX



Stanislas De Longeaux

Age: 27

Lives: Santa Monica, California; born in Paris.

Profession: IFBB Pro Physique competitor, brand ambassador, online trainer.


Likes: California weather, training, reading new research about training, meeting people from all over the world, helping others


Dislikes: Cold weather, rain, being out of competition shape

Drives: VW Golf convertible

Wants to drive: Aston Martin V12 Vantage S Roadster

Listens to: Drake, Lil Wayne, Fetty Wap, 50 Cent, DMX, early-2000 hip-hop

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THE KEYS TO ACHIEVING A RIPPED SET OF ABS LIE BEYOND YOUR TOE TOUCHES AND BICYCLE CRUNCHES.

In fact, these exercises are among the least effective abdominal exercises you can do. Sloppy bouncing and wiggling on your back is not going to aid in dropping those extra five pounds from your midsection. Furthermore, many fitness experts contend that ab exercises are not even required to maintain a six-pack, since compound movements such as squats, deadlifts, bench presses, and overhead presses engage the core muscles. However, the abs are just like any other muscle in the body, which can be targeted and isolated with proper movements.

First of all, there is not a miracle exercise and there is not a miracle supplement for losing abdominal fat. Stop believing those



in the gym and in the kitchen. The bad news is that you cannot spot reduce excess abdominal fat tissue by doing hundreds of crunches. Rather, overall fat loss and cardio work will help shrink this area allowing the abs to shine through.

post-exercise oxygen consumption, otherwise known as EPOC or the afterburn effect. HIIT appears to burn more calories throughout the day in comparison to steady-state low-intensity training, making it a much more time-efficient choice.

HIIT APPEARS TO BURN MORE CALORIES THROUGHOUT THE DAY IN COMPARISON TO STEADY-STATE LOW-INTENSITY TRAINING, MAKING IT A MUCH MORE TIME-EFFICIENT CHOICE.

infomercials promising a simple, one-step trick for attaining your dream body. Secondly, you will never out-crunch a bad diet. If you want to start seeing your abs pop, you are going to have to work for it

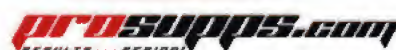
High-intensity interval training (HIIT), including exercises such as sprints, has shown to be equally as effective as longer-duration steady-state cardio for dropping extra weight as a result of excess

For good reason, this style of training has become very popular among physique-oriented athletes. However, HIIT can also be very taxing and difficult to maintain on a daily basis. There is no shame



NO WAY???
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in taking a break from HIIT and focusing on some ab work.

A problem arises when gym-goers fail to get the most out of their routine, either by overtraining their abs or performing a very narrow range of motion, such as crunches or sit-ups. When the core is trained in just a single angle, you fail to fully engage all the abdominal muscle fibers. The midsection is made up of several different muscles, including the obliques, rectus abdominis, transverse abdominis, and erector spinae. Utilizing a variety of exercises to hit all the different angles of flexion with various intensities of training will ultimately lead to the greatest muscle adaptation. Additionally, assuring your ab routine is at a high intensity allows for similar fat-burning benefits observed with HIIT, while giving your legs (and mind) a break from sprints. **IM**

COMPOUND SET 1

EXERCISE	SETS x REPETITIONS
Cable Crunch	3 x 20, 15, 10
Cable Torso Rotation	3 x 20, 15, 10 each side

2-minute rest

CABLE CRUNCH

Kneel on a mat below a high pulley with a rope attachment. Grasp and pull the rope down until your hands are close to your face. In the starting position, allow your hips to flex forward slightly while allowing the weight to hyperextend the lower back. Imagine someone is putting a fist into your lower back making your chest puff out.

Without allowing your butt to drop to your feet, contract the abs to flex the waist so the elbows travel toward the middle of the thighs. Exhale as you perform this portion of the movement. Hold the contraction for a second before slowly returning to the starting position. This exercise is great because it maintains a constant tension on the abs throughout the movement. Choose a weight that allows a full range of motion without putting unwanted stress on the lower back.

HIGH-INTENSITY ABS PROGRAM

The routine is designed to overload the core muscles just as you would with bigger muscle groups, utilizing compound sets to target varying fibers and elevate the intensity. Complete each compound set with minimal rest before moving on to the next two exercises. Several of the compound sets increase intensity by pyramiding the loads while decreasing the number of repetitions required. With each exercise, focus on contracting the abs with every repetition. Utilize controlled movements, and avoid swinging and bouncing. When performed correctly, this routine should take approximately 30 minutes and can be performed two to three times per week after you have completed the large multi-joint lifts of your strength program.





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CABLE TORSO ROTATION

Set the pulley on the cable machine to chest height with a D-handle attachment. Stand upright facing the cable machine and grasp the handle with both hands while keeping the arms fully extended in front of you. From this starting position, rotate your torso to one side, keeping your eyes on your hands as you move. Keep the arms fully extended throughout the entire range of motion. Allow the torso to rotate to the point right before your hips want to open up. Then rotate back to the center and alternate sides. Choose a weight that allows a full range of motion without putting unwanted stress on the lower back.

COMPOUND SET 2

EXERCISE

SETS x REPETITIONS

Dumbbell Side Bend

3 x 20, 15, 10 each side

Hanging Leg Raise

3 x 20

2-minute rest

DUMBBELL SIDE BEND

Stand up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Hold a dumbbell in one hand with the palms facing your body. Again, choose a weight that allows full range of motion without putting unwanted stress on the lower back. Place the opposite hand directly behind your ear or at your side. From this starting position, bend only at the waist to the side opposite the dumbbell. Bend in a motion as if you were trying to bring your elbow to your thigh. Hold the contraction for a second before slowly returning to the starting position. Throughout the range of motion, keep the rest of the body stationary with the back and head straight up. Complete the number of repetitions on each side, and then change hands to complete the repetitions bending to the alternate side.



HANGING LEG RAISE

Hang from a chin-up bar with both arms fully extended using a grip slightly greater than shoulder width. Allow the legs to hang straight down. From this starting position, bend your knees and raise your legs until the torso makes a 90-degree angle with your thighs. Hold the contraction for a second before slowly returning to the starting position. Keep the arms straight and the trunk perpendicular to the ground throughout the range of motion to avoid swinging the legs and torso.

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COMPOUND SET 3

EXERCISE	SETS x REPETITIONS
Sit-Up Plank	3 rounds
Jumping Knees-To-Chest	3 x 10

2-minute rest

SIT-UP PLANK

Settle into a decline bench as you would for a normal sit-up with your legs secured and arms in front of your chest. Recline until your back is parallel to the ground. When you reach this position, freeze and hold the contraction for 10 seconds before returning back to the starting position. Then drop back and hold the contraction at the parallel position for nine seconds before returning back to the starting position, then eight seconds, then seven, and so on down to one second. During each round, maintain proper back posture and focus on contracting the abs rather than the legs to hold the sit-up plank.



JUMPING KNEES-TO-CHEST

Stand up straight with your feet placed approximately shoulder-width apart and your arms at your side. From this starting position, dip down into a quarter-squat while swinging the arms back to set up a countermovement jump. Immediately explode straight upward, jumping as high as you can while driving the knees toward the chest. As you come down, extend your legs to land back on your feet. During each repetition, focus on quality, rather than speed. After each jump, take a deep breath before completing the next repetition. This will allow you to maximize the height reached during each jump.



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Marco Rivera
IFBB Pro • Team MHP

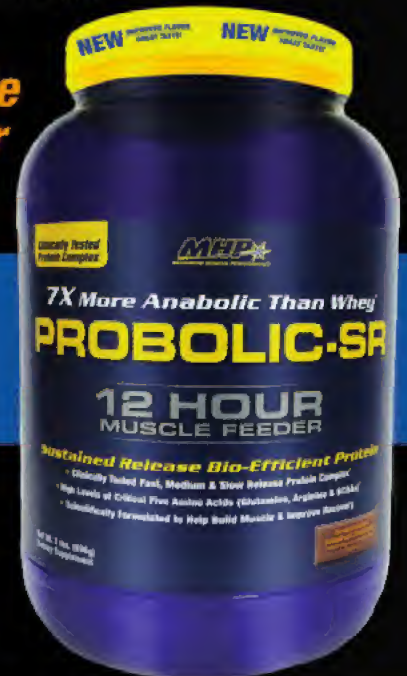
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COMPOUND SET 4

EXERCISE	SETS x REPETITIONS
Overhead Medicine Ball Slam	3 x 10
Barbell Ab Rollout	3 x 10

OVERHEAD MEDICINE BALL SLAM

Stand up straight with your feet placed approximately shoulder-width apart. Hold a soft medicine ball with both hands directly in front of your torso. From this starting position, start the countermovement by raising the medicine ball above your head while fully extending your body. Then, slam the ball into the ground directly in front of you as hard as you can. Retrieve the medicine ball with both hands and return to the starting position. Focus on quality, rather than speed by taking a deep breath in between repetitions, and, of course, be sure the ball does not bounce back up toward your face.



BARBELL AB ROLLOUT

Start in a push-up position with the knees on the floor and your hands grasping an Olympic barbell loaded with five- or 10-pound plates on each side. Keep a slight arch in your back with the arms fully extended directly below your shoulders. From this starting position, begin to slowly roll out the Olympic barbell away from your body to a comfortable range of motion before returning back to the starting position.



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THE FUTURE OF MEN'S PHYSIQUE

The relatively young sport is only in its adolescence, but it's experienced explosive growth. What will the division look like 10 years from now?

BY MIKE CARLSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RON AVIDAN



SADIK HADZOVIC

THE

NPC/IFBB MEN'S PHYSIQUE DIVISION IS SO NEW THAT IF IT WERE FOOTBALL, COMPETITORS would still be wearing leather helmets and running the Flying Wedge. In bodybuilding terms, the fledgling sport is in the Reg Park era. It's hard to imagine athletes hitting the stage looking even fuller and more conditioned than current top-three placers like Jeremy Buendia, Sadik Hadzovic, or Jason Poston, but if history has taught us one thing—and feel free to draw a line from Larry Scott to Phil Heath—bodies will always get better.

No matter how you feel about Men's Physique, the division is clearly here to stay. Along with Bikini, these two categories have reanimated the fitness industry like a pair of electric defibrillators to the heart.

Iron Man magazine organized a panel of industry experts to share their knowledge and opinions on how the sport of Men's Physique will continue to evolve, adapt, and improve over the next several years. Spoiler alert: The best of Men's Physique is yet to come.

THE PANEL



TRAINER
Ryan Bentson

A competitive superheavyweight bodybuilder in the 1990s, Bentson is the owner of Zero Gravity Fitness in San Dimas, California, and the trainer of Team Zero Gravity Fitness, which has over 200 Men's Physique competitors.



COMPETITOR
Jason Poston

Physique superstar Jason Poston is an IFBB pro, MET-Rx athlete, and native Texan. He has won several pro physique shows and was the runner-up at the 2015 Arnold Sports Festival. He is currently training for the 2015 Olympia Weekend.



JUDGE
Lee Thompson

The current NPC district chairman of Texas, Lee Thompson is a Mr. Olympia judge as well as an IFBB Pro League judge. He officiated his first bodybuilding contest in 1999 and has since judged more than 500 bodybuilding and physique competitions.

Iron Man: To what do you attribute the success of the Men's Physique division?

Ryan Bentson: Guys are seeing it as being attainable. They look at a picture of Jason Poston and think, "If I diet hard and train hard, I can be there." Also, bodybuilding physiques are not pretty anymore. They look like big frogs. They are distended and blocky. That has pushed more people to want to do Men's Physique. There is no one on this planet outside of a competitive bodybuilder who wouldn't want to look like a pro physique competitor.

Jason Poston: I think it gives guys a lot of confidence. They learn about food and working out, and they hang out with dudes who are into what they are into. Then they pay a couple bucks and get an NPC card, and now they're part of something. It's a culture. There is much more community in physique than in bodybuilding. The bodybuilder mentality is about doing everything by themselves, but you'll see a group of 10 physique guys working out together.

Lee Thompson: I think social media has a direct correlation to our growth and our impact on the mainstream. Everybody

wants to take a picture of themselves in the mirror and show their abs or their guns. It's that validation they receive from social media and to be able to step onstage and showcase their work against like-minded people.

IM: Do you think we will see a dominant figure emerge in Men's Physique, like a Ronnie Coleman or a Dorian Yates?

RB: I don't think we'll have a return Mr. O for the first five years. In every pro qualifier since physique started, there's a new batch of guys coming in who are even a little better than the pros from the year before. The quality is jumping at the national level faster than at the pro level. Half the pros that were in the Olympia lineup last year didn't qualify this year.

JP: I definitely see it happening. In physique you have guys training at a younger age for a specific result. They're attempting to keep the waistline smaller but the lats broad and the shoulders wide. It's a matter of time before the younger generation keeps working at it, and then we see this superstar come up who has every advantage.

LT: I wouldn't say it's impossible, but I think it's highly improbable. The numbers of competitors in Men's Physique are far greater than we ever had in bodybuilding. In the Ronnie Coleman era, you were looking at 25 top bodybuilders. In Men's Physique we have over 300 pros. There are too many different physiques and competitors to have one person dominate year after year.

IM: We've seen bodybuilders and women's figure competitors push the envelope on size. Will physique athletes get bigger and bigger?

RB: It's already getting there. A couple of my competitors in the C-class are 5'9" and get onstage at 205 pounds. Where it will cross the line is when guys start to look too synthetic. A guy like Jason is a big guy, but it fits his frame well. He's tall and he has broad clavicles. But he would have to be 240 pounds to be competitive as a pro bodybuilder, so there's still a significant gap between those two groups.

JP: Yeah, I think guys will get bigger and bigger. Not to the point where you see waistlines expanding or extreme vascularity or where guys look totally juiced out. We've already seen a little bit of that, but no one talks about those guys, because they were in last place. Physique is all about symmetry and the beauty of the male anatomy.

LT: It's a natural progression, but we contain it at the judging panel. We have to do a better job than we did in the late '90s.



JASON POSTON

"My philosophy is, you don't train because you want to compete, you compete because you love to train."

As judges we know that athletes are always going to try to push the limit. It's our job as judges and officials to maintain a criterion and judge to that. At the end of the day we're managing a look.

IM: In your opinion, is there an optimal height and weight for winning physique shows?

RB: That is the good part about Men's Physique, because they're not judging on sheer muscularity and size; symmetry is way more important than overall muscularity. It's not uncommon to see a A-class competitor win the overall. Since it goes by height and not weight, you're being judged in proportion to your own physique.

JP: No. Jeremy Buendia is like 5'7", but you don't notice. He holds his weight so well, he doesn't look like a short guy. I'm about 5'11", and me and Anton Antipov are the same height. Sadik is like six foot. Steve Cook is about 6'1".

LT: No. I can be six feet tall, and 220 pounds might look good on me because I am very balanced and my legs and upper torso and lower torso match up. But someone else at that height and weight might look like a water buffalo.

IM: Is there a peak age for Men's Physique competitors?

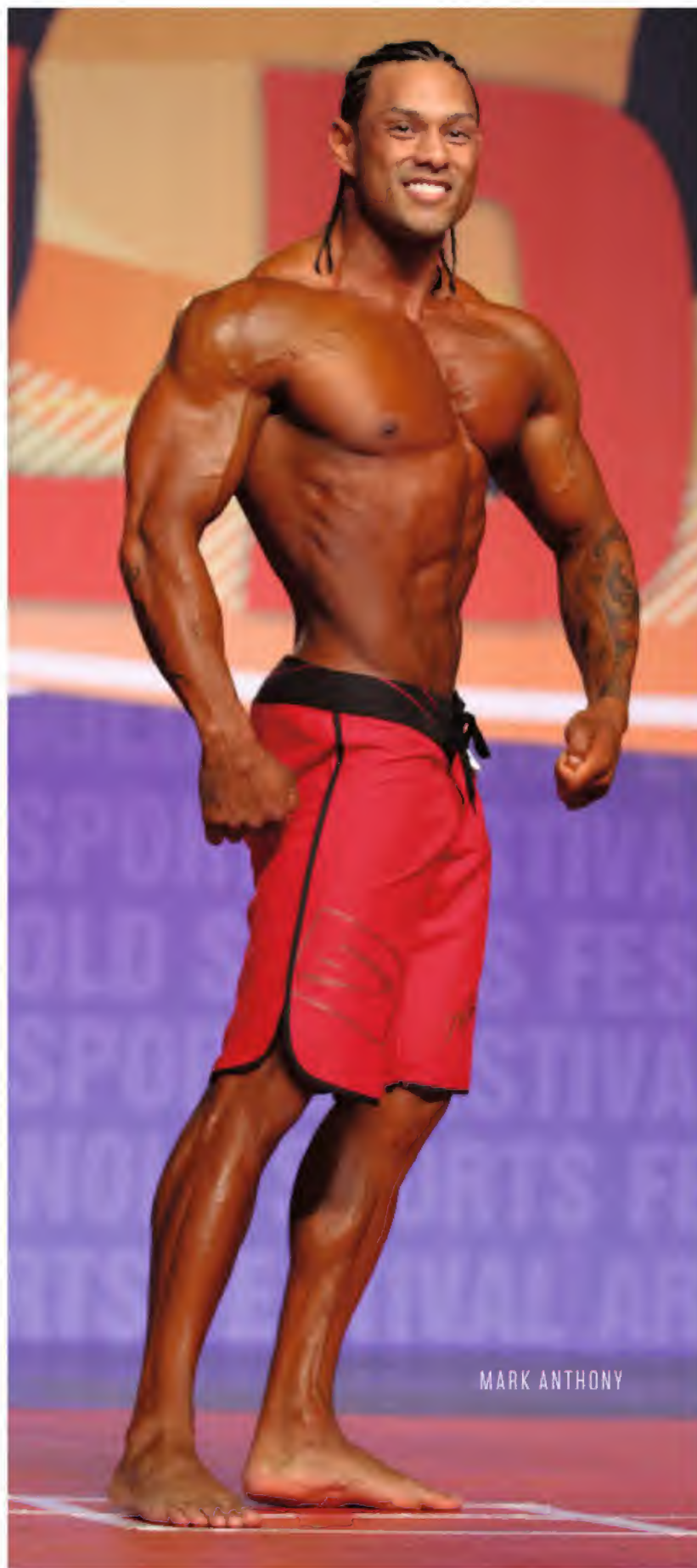
RB: I would say that the ideal age for pro Men's Physique is close to 30. The ideal look of Men's Physique is full round mus-

"It is a matter of time before the younger generation keeps working at it, and then we see this superstar come up who has every advantage."

cle bellies but not overly vascular and striated. To get that look, you have to have a lot of muscle density and not get yourself overly dehydrated. Guys with more muscle density tend to look better because they don't have to get as dehydrated as the guys who don't have that maturity.

JP: It doesn't seem like it. I haven't reached my peak yet and I'm 32. I'm the older guy in the top three.

LT: No, you have a Jeremy Buendia, who is 24 or 25, and you have Javon Walker, who is coming up and he's 36. It has a lot to do with genetics and how long your body can last. If you have that strong elasticity in your skin, this is for you.



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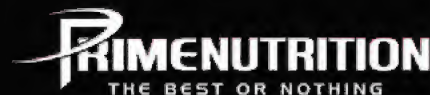
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IM: What is a common problem you see in in young physique athletes?

RB: Most competitors don't understand the illusion of bodybuilding. Everyone thinks they need to be bigger than they

"There is no one on this planet outside of a competitive bodybuilder who wouldn't want to look like a pro physique competitor."

are, but they underestimate the ability of looking big with conditioning and posing. Men's Physique is another division of bodybuilding, and one thing that bothers me is that a lot of new guys don't know the history of our sport. Half of the new guys don't even know who Ronnie Coleman is. If you don't understand the evolution of the sport or know about the people who made it possible for you to be competing, you're never going to understand what terms like "symmetry" mean.

JP: I agree with Ryan. You can't get away from the basics of bodybuilding. I grew up reading tons of books, buying all the DVDs. I love Arnold's *Encyclopedia of Modern Bodybuilding*. Physique is bodybuilding. We are just presenting the body in a different way.

LT: A lot of new competitors don't take the time to read the rules. They don't know what they're judged on or that they have to wear boardshorts that are just above the knee. As kids, when they signed up for Little League they read the rules. But now they just grab an entry form and show up.

IM: What's your best piece of advice for young aspiring competitors?

RB: Consistency. A lot of guys show up to the gym with their Six-Pack Bag, and they have two duffel bags of every wrist wrap and belt known to man. They do one show, and then I don't see them again for six months. My philosophy is, you don't train because you want to compete. You compete because you love to train.

JP: Build a foundation for your body. A lot of guys want to jump into unique isolation exercises, when in the early years they should really focus on mastering the basic compound movements and get their joints and tendons used to heavy weights. Master the form and movements of bodybuilding and don't just chase cool new exercises.

LT: Have fun, live a healthy lifestyle and enjoy what you're doing. **IM**



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SUMMER HEAT

**RARE AND EXOTIC, LA REINA SHAW
IS THE QUEEN OF BIKINI SEASON.**

INTERVIEW BY DR. CAT BEGOVIC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL NEVEUX

When it comes to finding beautiful women from exotic locales, there is no place like Los Angeles. Case in point: La Reina Shaw, an exotic stunner from Azerbaijan, a country seated at the crossroads between Eastern Europe and Asia. La Reina—model, fitness star, actress, and entrepreneur—came to L.A. to live out her dream. Her killer curves and mysterious smile makes us want to know more.

Dr. Cat Begovic: Tell us a little bit about yourself and your background. What was it like growing up? When did you move to the States?

La Reina Shaw: I was born in the Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. I moved to Germany when I was five and grew up there. I moved to the States when I was 20 to go to college. Since I was a child, I'd always wanted to move to the

U.S. My grandfather was a world traveler and always told me how beautiful places were in the States, and I always imagined what it would be like to live there. I think I inherited my travel gene from my grandfather. I love to see different cultures, different cuisines, and I feel that traveling makes me very open-minded to people of different religions and all walks of life.



I grew up very open-minded, especially when it came to showing one's body. Growing up, my grandfather had a big property on the beach and everyone was always running around in bikinis and enjoying the water. In Germany, we were always by the lake on weekends and everyone was very free, even naked. I was raised to think that loving your body and feeling free was natural and not a big deal.

CB: You have a very exotic look and a beautiful shape! I know Brazil gets all the hype when it comes to curvy women, but should we pay more attention to Azerbaijani women?

LS: I'm a mix. My grandmother is Armenian, and the rest of my family is Azerbaijani. I don't know if women from Azerbaijan are known for being curvy [laughs]. My grandmother and three of her sisters have table-top booties, so I guess I got it from them!

CB: How did you get involved in fitness?

LS: I started working out a few years ago and became really passionate about it. It was exciting to see the changes in my body as I put work into it. About a year and a half ago I was approached by Dexter Jackson who asked me to join Team Blade. That was the starting point for everything. I competed in my first show four months later. The more I got into it I realized how much I loved it. It's an amazing feeling when you work hard and see the results.


CB: How did you get into acting, and is that something you're passionate about?

LS: I've always wanted to be an actress. When I moved to L.A., I met with a few agencies that picked me up right away. I'm now actively trying to get into the film and commercial world. I'm taking a bunch of classes and have been working hard to develop this.

CB: I see your name on various hip-hop sites. Have you been featured in any music videos?

LS: I've only done two music videos—one was Sam Smith "Money On My Mind," and another was for a Mexican artist. I've gotten a lot of offers to do music videos, but I've turned them down.



A full-page photograph of a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a bright red one-piece swimsuit. She is sitting on a sandy beach, leaning back on her hands, and looking over her right shoulder towards the camera. The background shows the ocean with waves breaking. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

"I was raised to think that loving
your body and feeling free was
natural and not a big deal."

CB: You have a fitness and training website as well as the clothing company Reign. How did each of those come about?

LS: I started my fitness and training website a few months ago. When I was working with Team Blade and training for competition, I was posting a lot on social media about getting in shape. I kept getting the same questions all the time about my workouts, diet, and training. So I developed my website and e-books to answer everything in great detail. It took a long time to create those plans! The clothing company Reign is fitness apparel. It's super fun and sporty. I design the graphics part of it and have a great team that helps put together the final product.

CB: What does your training and diet look like?

LS: I do 30 minutes of cardio in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening, six days a week. Each day I focus on two body parts: glutes and hamstrings, shoulders and chest, back and biceps, and then quads and calves. I have an abs day where I mix it with a body part that I feel needs more work. On the sixth day, I usually do plyometrics and hot yoga, which helps me with flexibility. I only do cardio in the morning that day.

My diet is really clean. For breakfast I have egg whites and oatmeal. Other than that I stick to chicken or fish and a vegetable. My nutritional philosophy is pretty simple. I combine a lean source of protein with nutrient-dense vegetables.

CB: What motivates you?

LS: Love is the greatest motivator of all! It brings me endless amounts of joy and pleasure encouraging other people and seeing them grow and reach their goals. The letters and e-mails I receive, the personal testimonies of people who have been successful because they have been following me certainly encourages me and motivates me to keep on doing what I'm doing. **IM**





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Dr. Cat Begovic is a double board certified plastic surgeon from Harvard and UCLA. She has published or presented over 40 articles in scientific journals and meetings and has been seen on various TV programs such as "The Doctors" TV show, *Entertainment tonight*, *CBS news*, *Fox*, and *Spike TV*.

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La Reina Shaw

Lives: Los Angeles, CA

Likes: Travel, music, driving, reading, outdoor activities, cooking

Dislikes: Difficult people, bad breath, body odor, onions

Drives: 2014 BMW 650i

Would like to drive: Ferrari 458 Spider

Favorite vacation spot: The Caribbean


Listens to: Almost everything. Electronic/house is probably my favorite


Latest book read: *Letters To A Young Poet* by R.M. Rilke

Latest movie seen: *San Andreas*

Favorite quote: "What the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve"

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Back Squat:

The basic squatting movement should be programmed into anyone's training program, whether they are an athlete, training for health reasons, or even someone recovering from a major injury. Squats are a fundamental movement that everyone should master. The advanced version of squats is the barbell back squat. When done correctly, back squats not only increase leg strength, but also improve trunk stability, upper-body strength, athletic performance, and mental fortitude.

The Mother of All Exercises is not easy for everyone to perform. Due to different limb lengths and body mechanics, some people have problems squatting correctly and to the proper depth. That said, people should have the bare-bones mo-

With so many training disciplines out there, it's easy to get lost in the shuffle. Olympic weightlifting has grown in popularity, and now you can find ordinary joes in practically every gym doing snatches, cleans and split jerks in their training regimens. Gymnastic-type movements have also become popular, and now handstands and muscle-ups are being included in daily workout programs. All of these styles of training have boatloads of advantages and should be included into your training program depending on your goals and health.

Yet with many different modes of training being introduced or reintroduced to the fitness world, sometimes we forget about the mainstays. The "Big 3" lifts (squats, bench presses, deadlifts) are, in my opinion, tried-and-true exercises that will always test a man's strength, power, and determination. They are the king of all exercises regardless of what new training technique is implemented in the fitness arena.

bility and skill to squat to where their thighs become parallel to the floor. (I have personally trained a seven-foot-tall basketball player who was able to do a perfect back squat without putting himself in harm's way.) When you start to introduce back squats into your program, make it a goal to eventually lift at least 1.5 times your bodyweight. Anything over that number is a great achievement.

Bench Press: The standard barbell bench press is the king of all upper-body lifts. Most people believe the bench works only your chest and arms. When done correctly using the most effective technique, however, bench pressing stimulates the musculature of your chest, shoulders, triceps, back, and even your legs. If you learn to bench properly, you can use your legs to press more weight. Pushing through your lower body and hips helps solidify your base, tightens your torso, and thereby allows you to press more weight. And if you are able to bench

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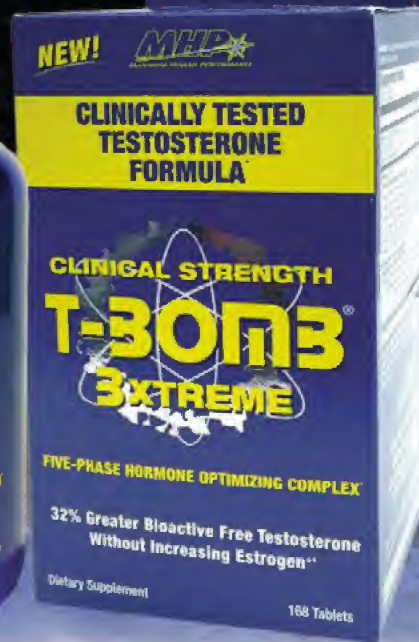
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To further validate the effectiveness of new Clinical Strength T-BOMB 3xtreme, MHP had the University of Tampa Human Performance Laboratory conduct a clinical study.* In this study, the goal was to test Clinical Strength T-BOMB 3xtreme on highly trained athletes (not the typical couch potatoes often used in other studies). MHP researchers wanted to test their formula in a setting that would be typical of its users' regimens. There were two groups of subjects: One group was given T-BOMB 3xtreme and the other group was given a placebo. Remarkably, the athletes using T-BOMB 3xtreme experienced significant improvements in their testosterone-to-estrogen ratio and showed a 32% increase in free testosterone with no estrogen increase. The placebo group showed no increase and in fact saw a decrease in testosterone and lean muscle. The researchers concluded that T-BOMB 3xtreme proved to be an effective formula for enhancing testosterone and keeping estrogen levels in check. The study also shows the vital importance of taking an effective testosterone enhancement for athletes who engage in intense exercise programs.



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more weight, you increase the strain placed on your chest and your other primary muscle groups being used—which leads to great upper-body development. For the bench press, you should be able to bench your bodyweight for a few reps, but working up to 1.5 times your bodyweight and eventually more than that as a one-rep max is definitely a prideful accomplishment.



Deadlift: Both a gift and a curse, deadlifts are often handled fairly well by smaller people since you're technically not supporting the weight but pulling it from the floor. It's also a lift where you see people making considerable gains fairly early when they're added to a training program. Once you master the proper technique, aim for deadlifting at least twice your bodyweight for maximal effort. If you keep training hard and include some smart accessory exercises (glute ham raises, Romanian deadlifts, hip thrusts), you can add weight to the bar fairly rapidly.

The Workout

This workout combines the Big 3 lifts into a smart and manageable circuit-training routine. For best results, you will need three barbells: one loaded on a bench, one on the floor, and another in a squat rack. This could be difficult in a crowded gym, but do your best. (And don't do this workout in your commercial gym at 6:00 p.m. on a Monday.) Set everything up by putting your belt or water bottle on or around the equipment you're saving and get moving. After all, if you do this quickly enough (as a circuit should be conducted), you won't keep the equipment all day.

Load each bar with your bodyweight and perform the below workout. Take no rest time between exercises. Pause just long enough to move from one station to the next. At the end of each circuit, recover for 60 seconds and repeat. Complete up to 10 rounds of the following:

- 3 reps of Bench Press
- 6 reps of Back Squat
- 9 reps of Deadlift

The rep scheme should allow you to finish the workout without changing the weights. People who suffer in a certain lift may find one or more of the Big 3 exercises difficult to handle, but if you have a decent base of strength, you should be able to soldier through. Go ahead and break the set if you hit failure, but perform all the reps.

This workout is a great finisher to your already programmed workout of the day (but cut it back to just a few circuits). And if you're short on time, this workout will get you in and out of the gym quickly, while blasting a ton of muscle fibers and really making you sweat.

Squats, benches, and deadlifts are guaranteed to produce results when done properly and if you have no prior health issues. If you combine these with the scientific results that circuit training produces, you have a recipe for muscle-building and fat-burning success. **IM**

Cornell Hunt is a Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist who trains athletes in Fairfield, New Jersey, and is the Xtreme Trainer for MHP. For more information, visit MHPStrong.com or HuntForStrength.com.



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References

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² Mulligan, S.E., et al. (1996). *J Str Cond Res*. 10;(4): 256–262.

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Mr. Olympia Predictions

Crystal Ball Shows Heath Streak to Continue

Okay, I'm giving another dude a shot to knock off the Swami (that's me, for those hiding under a rock for the past two decades!) and be crowned the "King of Prognosticators."

Where did that title come from? Heck, I just made it up now, but sounds pretty impressive, eh? In any case, Dave Liberman is the latest to be given this gracious opportunity to match Mr. Olympia (and the 212 Showdown) wits with your truly.

As a former competitor himself, a contest promoter, and correspondent for this magazine for years, Liberman is a walking almanac when it comes to bodybuilding facts and figures.

Two key points to keep mind before laughing, or crying, at our selections. This column is being penned in mid-June, an entire three months before the Big Dance at Las Vegas' Orleans Arena. Have you seen many bodybuilders that far out from a show? Hope I don't have to explain that one. And we don't know everybody who will end up qualifying—several major pro shows are taking place between now and Olympia Weekend time.

So, without further adieu, here's two views on what will go down in Sin City the weekend of September 17–20.

Mr. Olympia: L.T.'s Picks

1st Place: Phil Heath. In shape, "The Gift" won't need one to make it five Sandows in a row. He should know by now going much past 240 pounds (at 5'10") isn't the route to take.

2nd Place: Kai Greene. Another runner-up slot for this freak show? Well, if he didn't beat Heath in 2013, when he could have, I don't see it happening now. He has gnarly muscle at 5'8" and around 260 pounds, although Greene will claim to be 280.

3rd Place: Shawn Rhoden. Best symmetry in the lineup. Got huge in off-season with hopes of matching the above two in muscularity. Will that do the trick? Not likely, but not impossible.



photo by Merv

The experts say Phil Heath wins again in September.



Phil Heath

Ron Avidan



Kai Greene

Ron Avidan



Phil Heath with Shawn Rhoden

Ron Avidan



Dennis Wolf



Dexter Jackson



Cedric McMillan



Branch Warren



Big Ramy



James "Flex" Lewis



Eduardo Correa



Jose Raymond



Hidetada Yamagishi

4th Place: Dennis Wolf. If he had better calves, Wolf could definitely challenge for the title. At six feet and about 265 pounds, Wolf still sports a small waist to go with arena-wide shoulders. A fan favorite.

5th Place: Dexter Jackson. The sport's Benjamin Button keeps on truckin'. Taking 5th place last year, the 45-year-old wonder set a new Arnold Schwarzenegger Classic record with his fifth victory in Columbus, Ohio, in March.

6th Place: Big Ramy. The might hasn't matched the hype for Mamdouh "Big Ramy" Elssbiay. Eighth at last season's Olympia, the 5'10", 275-pounder did topple the field at the Arnold Brasil in May, but he still needs to be sharper to be a contender in a main event.

7th Place: Branch Warren. Just when most of us thought Warren had seen his better days, he finishes right behind Jackson at this year's ASC. This true warrior refuses to go away quietly.

8th Place: Cedric McMillan. At press time, McMillan was not yet qualified for the Mr. O, but I'm taking a chance here and saying he will. He finished right behind Big Ramy in Brasil. At 6'1" and around 256 pounds, he combines size and shape.

9th Place: Juan Morel. Keeps improving. His victory over Victor Martinez at the New York Pro in May showed that Morel, 10th last year, is definitely capable of moving up a notch or two.

10th Place: Roelly Winklaar. Carries as much muscle, pound for pound, as anybody on stage at about 5'7" and 260 pounds or so. But he is so inconsistent with his conditioning, I have trouble placing him higher than 10th.

X-Factor: Steve Kuclo. If Kuclo ends up on the Olympia stage (not qualified as of press time), he could land anywhere between 7th and 10th after finishing 9th a year ago.

Liberman's Picks:

1st Place: Phil Heath. No gifts here. Wins again with near-flawless physique.

2nd Place: Kai Greene. Freaky mass will dominate the rest of the field other than Heath.

3rd Place: Dennis Wolf. Widest man on stage should get the bronze ahead of Rhoden this year.

4th Place: Shawn Rhoden. Unparalleled symmetry and shape. Needs to be a tad thicker to win it.

5th Place: Dexter Jackson. Another win at the ASC this year, another top five Olympia finish.

6th Place: Big Ramy. Needs to be sharper to finish higher than this.

7th Place: Branch Warren. Never count this guy out. Grainy with unreal thickness.

8th Place: Roelly Winklaar. Predict much better conditioning at the Olympia, allowing Winklaar to finish in the top eight.

9th Place: Steve Kuclo. Not sure if he is competing, but if he is, Kuclo should retain his top 10 finish from last year.

10th Place: Cedric McMillan. Has the size and shape. Sharper conditioning could move him up several places.

212 Showdown:

L.T.'s Picks

1st Place: James "Flex" Lewis. Lewis was not nearly at his best last year, but he still won the title for the fourth year in a row. Don't expect him to have that happen two years in a row.

Two key points to keep in mind before laughing, or crying, at our selections. This column is being penned in mid June, an entire three months before the Big Dance at Las Vegas' Orleans Arena.

2nd Place: Eduardo Correa. Second last year, but fell to third at the Arnold 212, with Jose Raymond and Hidetada Yamagishi finishing ahead of him. Could happen again unless he's 100 percent on his game.

3rd Place: Jose Raymond. Could be 2nd. Shoot, he could be 1st, although a long shot. He is the thickest guy in the field at 5'4" and 211 pounds.

4th Place: Aaron Clark. I'm predicting his subpar showing in 2014 (6th) will spur him on to show up in best shape ever.

5th Place: Hidetada Yamagishi. The Asian Sensation beat both Correa and Clark at the Arnold, but I'm not sure he can do it again.

6th Place: Baito Abbaspour. Shoot, he finished 5th last year, and I had him higher, so what the heck am I'm doing putting him one place down from 2014? Capable of a top three finish.

Liberman's Picks:

1st Place: James "Flex" Lewis. Will dominate again with his outstanding shape and razor-sharp conditioning.

2nd Place: Jose Raymond. Thick as a tank with combo of fullness and hardness.

3rd Place: Eduardo Correa. Will be most conditioned competitor in the field.

4th Place: Hidetada Yamagishi. Great poser, good size and conditioning.

5th Place: Aaron Clark. Has it all, and if he dials it in, could press the guys at the top.

6th Place: Baito Abbaspour. Lots of muscle, but lacks the shape of some of the people ahead of him. I could be wrong on this one, he's very good.

So, Liberman and I are pretty much in line with how things will turn out this season. He did bail, however, when I asked for his selections in the other divisions, so I'll go it alone.

Men's Physique: A really close division, with all the top guys returning. Jeremy Buendia scored the win last year, but can't rest on his laurels with Sadik Hadzovic, Jason Poston, Matt Acton, and Anton Antipov all capable of winning the class. I'll go for the upset here, with Hadzovic moving past Buendia to take away the crown. Don't be surprised if Poston and Antipov are right in the mix.

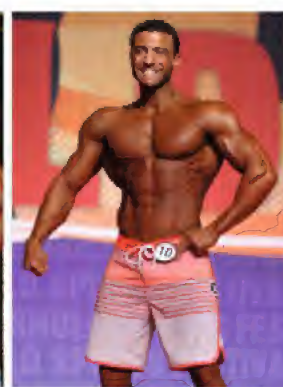
Women's Physique: Juliana Malacarne, in shape, is pretty much untouchable here. Malacarne defeated reigning champion Dana Linn Bailey in 2014. I can see Tycie Coppett moving into the second slot this year over Bailey, a social media phenom who might be the most popular athlete on the pro level. Karina Nascimento is also a legit challenger, and Mindi O'Brien and Sabrina Taylor could cause some trouble for the headliners.



Jason Poston



Sadik Hadzovic and Jeremy Buendia



Matt Acton



Juliana Malacarne



Oksana Grishina



Camala Rodriguez-McClure upsets the field at the Arnold Classic



Nicole Wilkins



Ashley Kaltwasser



left to right: Victoria Francois, David Fry, Carli Terepka, Seth Brown



L.T. and Nathan Faulk



Retired MJ jersey at Laney High



Mike Valentino



LT and Krista Dunn



Johnny Grady, . L.T., Lauren Valentino, Mike Valentino, Pat Valentino

Fitness: Oksana Grishina wins it again. Grishina also won the Arnold Fitness in March and looks like the heavy favorite to repeat. Stunning in performance round and improved physique. I'll put Tanji Johnson, still great at 40, in second with Bethany Cisternino, Regina DaSilva, Fiona Harris, Trish Warren, Myriam Capes, and Whitney Jones all battling for a top six finish.

Figure: On paper, multi-time champion Nicole Wilkins looks unbeatable, and I'm going with her to nab the crown again. But it may not be as easy as some think. The biggest surprise this year took place at the Figure International in Columbus, where Camala Rodriguez-McClure—13th at last season's Olympia—stunned everyone with a first-place victory over the heavily favored Candice Keene. Throw in another sublime Candice Lewis and the likes of Ann Titone and Latorya Watts, and this class may not be the cakewalk for Wilkins as most people think.

Bikini: Ashley Kaltwasser is on a roll, with back-to-back wins at both the Olympia and the Bikini International in Ohio, but I felt it could have gone either way at last year's Olympia between Kaltwasser and Janet Layug. Layug moved all the way up from eighth at the 2014 Bikini International to the runner-up slot behind Kaltwasser. But with such standouts as Yeshaira Robles, Stacey Alexander, India Paulino, and Amanda Latona-Kuclo joining the party, this might not just be a two-way battle for first. I'm going with Layug in what might be the upset of the weekend.

Good Times In North Carolina

Hard to believe, but it had been 10 years—I think—since I last emceed a show for Mike Valentino, the North Carolina State Chairman and former NPC and IFBB standout.

When Valentino first approached me to host the NPC Gold's Classic and Eastern All US Military Championships in Wilmington, I agreed on one condition: He would have to give me a lift to the Laney High School basketball arena before the weekend was over. I just had to see the court where Michael Jordan first displayed the mind-boggling skills on the way to becoming the greatest player of all time.

Like Jordan always did, Valentino came through big time. On Friday afternoon the gym was open, and the current head coach at Laney, Nathan Faulk, welcomed us with open arms. I asked him if he had any MJ's on the horizon; since those types appear every century or so, we know the answer.

Then Valentino showed me his largest Gold's Gym in Wilmington—he owns 10 gyms throughout the state—where I met his super-friendly staff and tried, unsuccessfully, to get a free bag of his own product, TRUProteins. After taking a tour of his prime time facility, there was a visit to his office, where Valentino conducts most of his business.

It was on to the show on Saturday night. A good contest, with some impressive winners. Seth Brown dominated the bodybuilding scene, and David Fry did likewise in Men's Physique. Carli Terepka, only 21, looked like a seasoned vet in taking the Figure title, as did Bikini champion Jacqueline Gomez. Ditto for the amazing Victoria Francois, a 29-year-old single mother of three who topped the field in Junior Figure.

It was good to see some familiar faces, like IFBB figure standout Krista Dunn and former Team Universe stud (and IFBB competitor) Johnny Stewart, now one of the top contest prep gurus in the state. Thumbs up to promoters Mike and Pat Valentino and Johnny Grady, and to all the competitors who graced the Wilmington Downtown Convention Center stage.

Let's do it again sometime...definitely before 2025. **IM**

To contact Lonnie Teper about material possibly pertinent to News & Views, write to 1613 Chelsea Road, #266, San Marino, CA 91108, or send e-mail to tepernews@aol.com.





Laura Ling

Hometown: Austin, TX

Current residence: Eastvale, CA

Age: 31

Height: 5'3"

Weight: 104 pounds (contest),
120 pounds (off-season)

Occupation: Project Manager

Contest highlights: 2015 NPC
Iron Man Naturally, Bikini, 2nd,
Class B; 2014 NPC West Coast
Classic, Bikini, 2nd, Class B

Factoids: Is a competitive
billiards player on the national
level; has a degree in Science
Health Information Management

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The rotator cuff muscles stabilize the shoulder joint. During the bench press and almost all other upper-body movements these muscles protect the shoulder joint and prevent ball-and-socket slippage. If these muscles are underdeveloped, they become the weak link in the action and your pressing strength suffers, or worse, you injure your shoulder. One of the best ways to strengthen this area and create an upper-body power surge is with direct rotator cuff exercise.

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○ EATING AND AGING

by Brett Osborn, DO, FAANS, CSCS, & Jay Campbell

As your age goes up, should your calories remain the same?

Several lines of evidence suggest that caloric intake influences the rate of aging and the onset of associated diseases in animals and possibly humans. An increasing body of clinical research shows that cumulative oxidative damage to macromolecules such as protein, lipids, and DNA also plays a major role in aging. Caloric restriction slows both the degree of oxidative damage and the associated decline in function. In other words, reducing our caloric intake will likely extend the life of the average human. But strength-training athletes are not average humans. If we want to maintain our fitness long into our 40s, 50s, and

60s, we can't eat 800 calories a day and hope to maintain our muscle mass. And therein lies the problem. Sarcopenia, or lack of skeletal muscle mass, is associated with declining immunity and susceptibility to disease. After all, one's resilience to disease is a direct function of muscle mass.

Whether you're 35 or 65, the number of calories you should be consuming each day varies according to your sex, height, weight, body composition, and activity level. It is a well-known fact that body fat increases as we age while muscle mass and bone mineral density decrease. Transitive-

ly, there is a reduction in one's basal metabolic rate (BMR) and a tendency to inflate that dreaded spare tire. Such abdominal adiposity stems also from an interrelated hormonal decline, plummeting testosterone levels in men and estrogen in women. Body fat, in particular visceral fat, which clings to your belly and surrounds your organs, releases adipocytokines or signaling molecules into the bloodstream, inducing insulin resistance and inflammation, the underpinnings of age-related disease.

So what is the best way to combat age-related physical decline? Adding muscle to your frame. Muscle offsets the natural decline in metabolic efficiency. Muscle tissue is the ultimate metabolic equalizer. Not only does it serve as a glucose sump, extracting sugar from the blood stream, but it also relies heavily on beta-oxidation of fats for cellular maintenance and repair. Muscular recovery after a rigorous strength-training session drives the fat-burning process.

How does this work? First and foremost is the provision of an adequate training stimulus. This acute stressor drives the reparative (muscle-building) process. Without it, there is no impetus to build muscle. Secondly, muscular growth must be supported by adequate recovery between training sessions and obtaining seven to eight hours of nightly sleep. Third, tailor your diet to suit your needs. As we've written many times, caloric intake regardless of age is reflective of one's goal.

First and foremost, one should understand his or her maintenance caloric requirement, known as your BMR or basal metabolic rate. This value, based upon several anthropometric variables, will guide food intake variation in the context of your fitness goals. If you don't know your BMR, simply utilize one of



News/Model: Diego Sebastian

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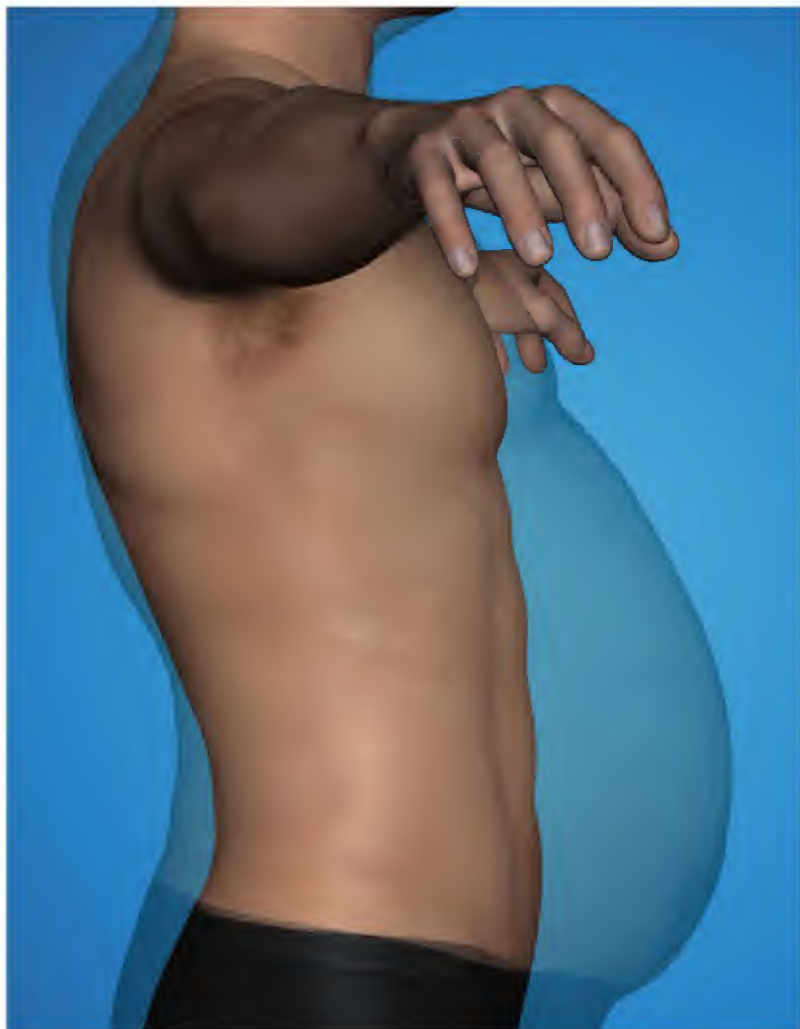
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To lose body fat, cycle calories by eating nine to 12 calories per pound on alternating days while restricting carbohydrate consumption, especially on non-resistance-training days.

To Lose Fat: Using the numbers derived from the calorie rules, reduce your carbohydrate intake by 50 grams a day, while leaving protein and fat intake unchanged. This will turn on the fat-burning process by driving insulin levels down.

Daily caloric maintenance can be estimated at 15 calories per pound of bodyweight. If one is looking to gain muscle mass, 16 to 18 calories per pound is a good start with an emphasis on lean protein and essential fatty acids. To lose body fat, cycle calories by eating nine to 12 calories per pound on alternating days while restricting carbohydrate consumption, especially on non-resistance-training days. How much carbohydrate restriction is necessary to stimulate the fat-burning process? That is a function of one's carbohydrate sensitivity, which is determined through trial and error. So-called "hard-gainers" tend to have low carbohydrate sensitivity, while those who put on weight quickly are more sensitive to carbs.

the web-based calculators. It is critical to enter your "lean body mass" into the field labeled "bodyweight." Lean body mass (LBM) is your weight minus your body fat. (You will need to get a reliable body-fat test done to figure out your lean body mass.) If you use your bodyweight, the calculator will overestimate your caloric needs, causing you to gain weight. After you determine your BMR, follow these calorie rules:

- 1. Eat one gram** of protein per pound of lean body mass. For instance, if your LBM is 170 pounds, eat 170 grams of protein daily. (170 pounds x 4 calories per gram of protein = 680 calories of protein a day.)
- 2. Start with 150 grams** of carbohydrates daily, regardless of your bodyweight. This equates to 600 calories of daily carbs. (150 grams of carbs x 4 calories per gram of carbs.)
- 3. Devote the remainder** of the calculated BMR calories to intake of healthy fats.

To Gain Muscle: Using the numbers derived from the calorie rules, increase both your carbohydrates and protein by 50 grams each. This will grant you an extra 400 calories a day and provide the nutritional substrate for muscle hypertrophy. You may add some body fat during this process, but that will be easy to rectify.

Goal-Based Guidelines

Follow these rules to optimize your lean body mass. It does take work and a willingness to experiment. Be patient. Be persistent. The muscle added to your frame will mitigate the effects of the aging process more so than any caloric reduction. The bottom line is, it takes very little money to stay healthy, but it does demand a squat rack and some blood, sweat, and tears.

To Maintain Your Current Weight

Eat 14 to 15 calories per pound. Carbohydrate consumption should depend on your insulin sensitivity; the more sensitive you are, the less carbs you need (or you run the risk of adding body fat).

To Lose Body Fat

Eat nine to 12 calories per pound. Lowering your carbohydrate consumption on non-strength-training days will temper insulin secretion, driving the fat-burning process.

To Gain Muscle Mass

Eat 16 to 17 calories per pound. In general, consume more calories on weight-training days. Carbohydrates should be consumed at a level necessary to put on muscle mass while minimizing fat deposition. **IM**

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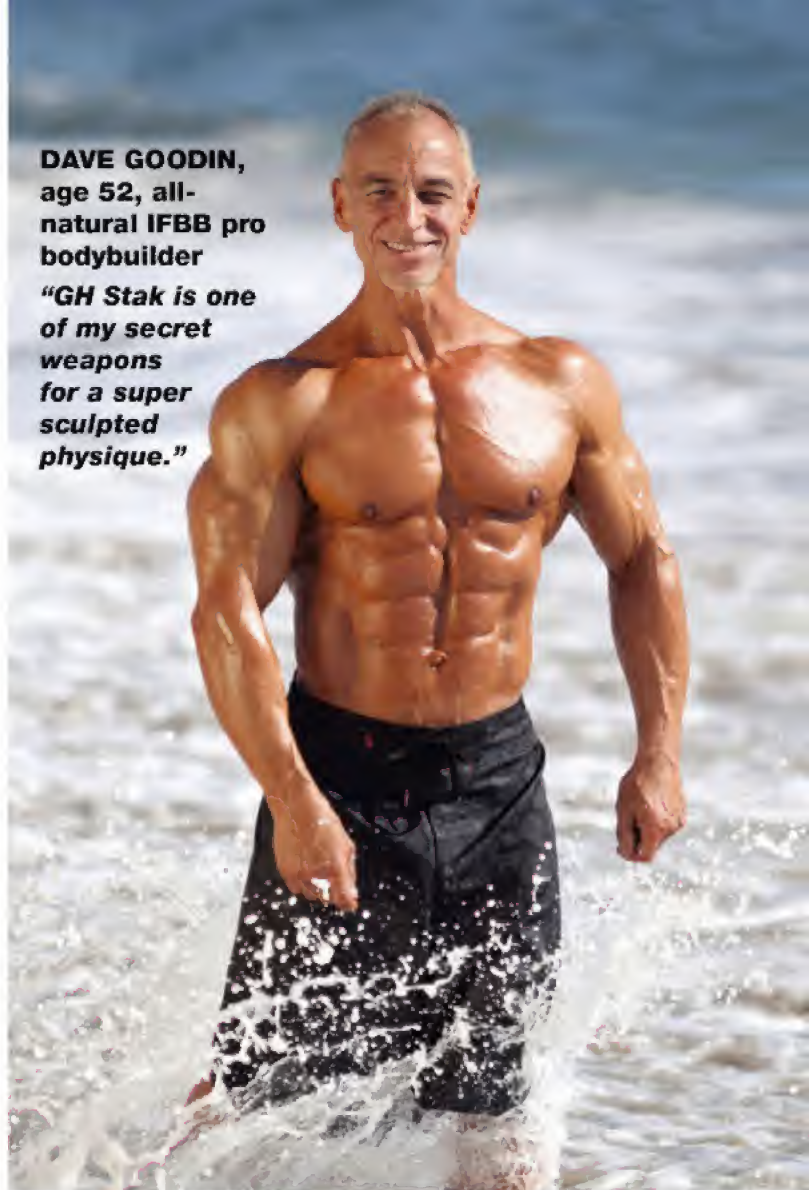
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Michelle Lewin

I had never heard of Michelle Lewin before the last issue of *Iron Man*, and now I can't stop looking at her. Her photos are so amazing. She has become my inspiration. I have never seen a better combination of muscle and femininity. Strong really is the new sexy. Her body is exactly what I aspire mine to be. I now follow her on Instagram and it has motivated my workouts like nothing else.

— Beth S, via email

Physique Magazine?

Is *Iron Man* becoming a magazine dedicated to Men's Physique? I don't see any pro bodybuilders anymore, just physique competitors. Is this a new direction for *Iron Man*?

— Jim K, via email

Editor's Note: We wouldn't call it a "new" direction. *Iron Man* has always showcased bodies that our readers want to emulate. Those bodies just happen to be found in the physique division more often than among open class bodybuilders. We love bodybuilding, it's in the very DNA of *Iron Man*. We see Men's Physique as just another expression of our favorite sport.



V-Day

I loved the article "Building the Mega-V" in the last issue. It is exactly what I am looking for in a workout: smart, to the point, and informative about a goal that I am interested in. It speaks to what I am trying to do in the gym. I've already started to add some of the exercises into my workout. My only complaint is that it could have been even longer and included more info.

— Dylan R, via email

New Models

Bravo on your choice of models in *Iron Man*. Joseph Lee might be the first Asian-American representative I have ever seen in a muscle magazine (except for the occasional pro bodybuilder like Hidetada Yamagishi). It's nice to see some diversity amongst fitness models, instead of the same cookie-cutter guys all the time. Keep it up!

— Bobby L, via email



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